

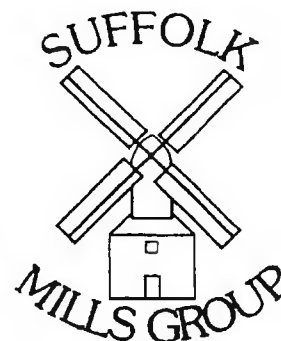
SUFFOLK MILLS GROUP

Newsletter

www.suffolkmills.org.uk

No. 100
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41 Melbourne Road,
Ipswich, Suffolk. IP4 5PP



The timing of this our 100th issue has been uncertain. This was partly due to my own circumstances, following an operation in December. On this front, I am (touch wood) pleased to say that I am making a good recovery, and even hope to be back at work before too long. The more prosaic reason for a further delay to the newsletter is the failing health of our word processor: this issue may well be its last. Many thanks to those of you who sent me material for the newsletter in response to the plea in the last editorial, including a couple of short pieces to mark the hundred and our 30th anniversary. Keep them coming!

Some of you may have heard of the encouraging result in the battle to save Tilty watermill in Essex from house conversion. Following a public inquiry last October, a proposal to convert the Grade II* mill, adding a large extension, was rejected by the planning Inspector. He considered residential use to be incompatible with the preservation of the machinery and ancillary equipment, along with the utilitarian spaces, and that because of this, the scheme effectively risked destroying the very thing which it aimed to save. How often do we hear that conversion is the only way of saving a mill? Here the Inspector agreed with the SPAB that the mill was not in imminent danger and that there was time for other solutions to emerge. What a contrast to the Stebbing inquiry decision (see Newsletter 91)!

How lucky we are in Suffolk to have so many fine watermills. To make the point, we are delighted to be able to hold this year's A.G.M. at (but not in) Kersey watermill, which we last visited back in 1981. This and other events are summarised below.

National Mills Weekend	Sat-Sun May 10th-11th
SPAB Mills Section day tour (Suffolk)	Saturday May 17th
SMG visit to Sweffing roundhouses	Sunday June 8th
Essex M.G. visit to Layham mill	Thursday July 10th
SMG A.G.M. & visit, Kersey mill	Sunday July 27th
Threshing Day, Bardwell windmill	Sunday August 17th
Heritage Weekend	Sat-Sun Sept 13th-14th

Mark Barnard

ONE HUNDRED JUST OUT Peter Steggall

This one-hundredth edition gives me an opportunity to congratulate Mark Barnard for editing and producing such a consistently interesting and informative newsletter for Suffolk Mills Group since its inception thirty years ago. Although I did not become a member until two years later, I had to read the 'back numbers' when, a few years ago, I compiled an index for Nos. 1 to 80. So I have read them all!

Apart from finding the newsletters so interesting - I have always read every word - they have provided me with an outlet for my lifelong urge to write. Between 1983 and 2004 Mark was kind enough to publish about thirty of my articles, mostly in two series - 'Mills and Me' and 'Putting Mills in the Picture'. In 1976 with Chris Hullcoop and others I took part in a Radio Orwell programme about Suffolk mills - 'On the Air with Rummy Weston'; my summary, written some years later with the aid of an audio tape recording, was published in Newsletter 43 in November 1988.

At the time of that broadcast I was still working for the County Council, but no longer officially involved with Suffolk mills. Any such responsibility had ceased after local government reorganisation in 1974. In the early 1970's I had been in the thick of the controversy caused by the proposed demolition of Friston post mill. It was saved, but the saga continues.

My articles included accounts of some mill visits arranged by the S.M.G.. The last which I was able to attend was in August 2004 when we had a conducted tour of what had been Marriage's Mill beside the original dock at Felixstowe. It has been demolished since our visit to permit the extension of the container port.

Just twelve months after the visit to Felixstowe I moved with my wife, Barbara, to Chelmsford. We were very sorry to leave Suffolk and all the friends and contacts we had made during the 43 years we lived in Ipswich. We are now well settled in Essex, near our family, but age and distance prevent me from taking any further part in S.M.G. activities. However I am still very pleased to receive and read the newsletter. Congratulations Mark, on ONE HUNDRED JUST OUT - but 'NOT OUT' we hope! My sincere thanks to Mark and the Suffolk Mills Group for all the interest and pleasure they have given me for so many years!

NEW PUBLICATIONS

Norfolk's Windmills by river, road and rail by Luke Bonwick.
Bonwick Publishing; 2008. Price £6.99.

An attractively-produced 74-page A5 format booklet, *Norfolk's Windmills* is designed to appeal to the many visitors to the county. It takes a detailed look at 15 corn windmills and 18 windpumps, arranged in a series of nine short tours, four for the corn mills and five for the windpumps on the Broads. As a bonus, further 'unusual' sites are described, the combined wind and watermills at Burnham Overy and Little Cressingham, and Morse's Wind Engine Park at Repps. Wind turbines also get a look in. The text is authoritative (what a joy to read the correct building date for Sutton mill!) and bang up to date (Polkey's Mill at Reedham is shown fully restored).

The subject is introduced by a series of short but extremely informative sections, separating out wind-powered corn milling from drainage. Especially welcome is coverage of some of the people involved with Norfolk's mills, including contemporary millwrights Richard Seago and Vincent Pargeter. Throughout, there is a superb selection of photographs both old and new, together with drawings and outline maps of each tour. The layout is

generally good, although the use of italics for the opening paragraph of many sections looks odd. The book should sell well, and hopefully improve visitor numbers at the mills featured.

Berkshire Windmills by Guy Blythman. Published by the author; 1997. Price £3 (including postage) from Guy Blythman, 32 Lindsay Court, Govett Avenue, Shepperton, Middlesex TW17 8AF.

This A5 format booklet is the result of research carried out in the late 1980's and early 1990's, and chronicles 49 windmill sites in the pre-1974 county of Berkshire. A few photographs and drawings are included, notably the oddly-proportioned smock mill at East Ilsley, which had a 10-bladed fantail. There is also a map, thoughtfully placed across the centre pages. Berkshire is probably the only English county where no physical remains of a windmill now survives; the one shown on the cover is a recently-constructed smock mill whose primary purpose seems to be living accommodation. Despite the paucity of windmills, the author is to be congratulated on a useful addition to any enthusiast's library.

THREE WINDMILL SKETCHES Ralph Gilbey

We are delighted to publish these atmospheric sketches, made in the 1950's, with commentary by the artist (to which further brief notes have been added).

Moreton mill, Essex

In 1940 I used to pass it on my bike as I made way from Little Hallingbury to a nearby vantage point from which I could watch the Spitfires taking off from North Weald. The mill was in full working order and I often visited the miller. I urged the

Timothy Weedon
Thomas Dagnall
S715



Essex C.C. to preserve it after the war when it had fallen into poor repair. The Council were not interested but told me that the splendid carving had been preserved in the County Museum. It was pulled down with a tractor.

Note Moreton was one of eight post mills known in England to have been built with three cross-trees and six quarterbars. The fine inscription on the main post records the building date, although it is now known that the mill was moved from Hertfordshire. It ceased work in 1931 and stood until 1964.

Baker Street, Orsett, Essex

Built 1765. Last worked 1917. Teeth of crown wheel stripped in gale owing to miller's wife failing to release brake. Estimate by Norfolk millwrights after last war £950 and £900. Struck by lightning 1926. Very fine view from cap but hazardous. 'You can follow me at your own risk' said the owner. 3 pairs of stones, 1 unused (?). Another two pairs in adjoining shed worked by very early beam engine.

Note The mill stood derelict until c.1980, since when it has been extensively repaired as part of a residential re-use of the surrounding buildings (see Newsletter 90).



Bilsby mill, Lincolnshire

A typical Lincolnshire tower mill. Brick built, onion cap. A sombre black.

Note The sketch was made in the mid 1950's when the mill was still in use by engine power. It worked by wind until 1932. The tower still stands.



REMINISCENCES OF A COUNTRY MILLER (10)

Harold Hitchcock

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

Perhaps a few jottings on the more modern system of flour milling may be of some interest to those folks who have not given much thought to the part the mills of our country play in bringing a regular supply of daily bread to their tables.

Externally the appearance of a modern flour mill is not very prepossessing, the buildings are erected for utilitarian purposes

and possess none of the gracefulness associated with the wind and watermills of a century ago - the latter immortalised in our eastern part of the country by Constable's paintings of Flatford Mill. Strange to say, so far as I am aware, no distinguished artist has seized upon the more graceful windmill for his Magnum Opus.

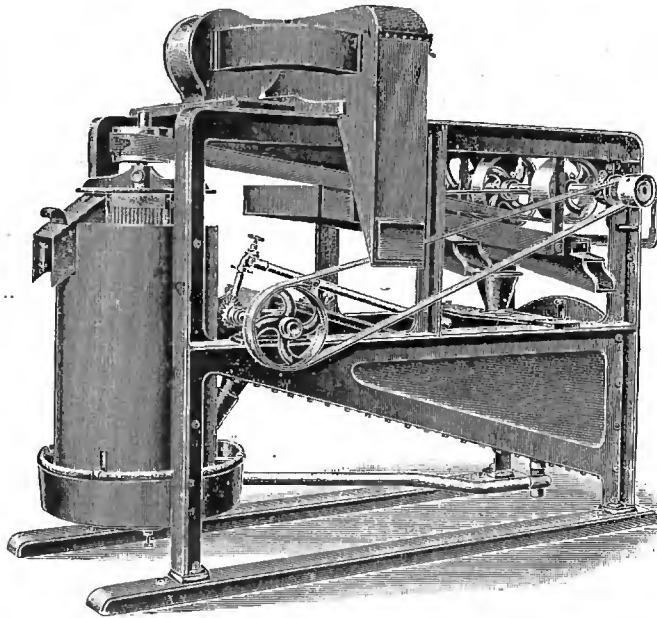
Constructed of brick or reinforced concrete, generally of an oblong shape, these vary in size from the small country mill producing as little as one or two sacks of flour (280lbs to the sack) to the mammoth mills erected at the docks turning out 100 to 120 sacks every hour of the day and night. Adjoining the mill proper and in communication therewith is the silo where wheat is stored in bulk, the larger and more modern type often being distinguished by the large circular concrete bins. In the case of mills on the dockside, ships with their cargoes of wheat from Canada, Australia or the Argentine, are discharged by pneumatic intake plant; the wheat is sucked up from the holds, deposited onto a large flat conveyor band and from thence directed into whatever bin required. The unloading process and all following operations are performed by machinery and all hand labour is eliminated.

Prior to the wheat being directed to bins, however, it is important that it should pass through an intake or rubble separator. This is a machine designed to deal with as much as 100 tons per hour and its purpose is to extract strings, straws, pieces of wood, bolts, etc as well as any fine dust or sand. Most of these articles would damage subsequent cleaning machinery and the miscellaneous collection of odds and ends of rubbish that does find its way into the wheat has to be seen to be believed.

At the smaller country mills' silos, where wheat is brought to the mill by railway truck or road lorries, it is usually conveyed in sacks and, at arrival at the mill, these are emptied into a large hopper feeding either a set of elevators - endless bands of leather or canvas with buckets attached every foot or so - or a more modern conveyor which moves the wheat en masse. An endless chain carries an open link every 10-12 inches and, in the case of a vertical type, the links project horizontally nearly fitting the circular tube or square trunking through which the chain is continually passing. Mysterious as it appears, when the tube or trunking is nearly full of wheat, these links raise the wheat, not as elevator cups each taking a certain quantity, but elevate the wheat in the mass. When used as horizontal conveyors, these links lie flat on the bottom of the trunking in which they are enclosed and gently carry along any quantity of wheat which the trunk can accommodate. The older type of spiral work conveyor, pushes and churns the wheat and is rather inclined to break and damage the grain.

For the cleaning of the wheat in preparation for milling as well as for the separation of extraneous matter and other grain admixed, many and various machines are employed and it would require many pages and an abler pen than mine to adequately describe these in detail. Pneumatic suction to lift and separate lighter matter than the sound wheat is one of the main principles employed; other separations are made by indented cylinders and

THE "MIDGET" GRAIN WASHER.



COMBINED MACHINE

CONSISTING OF
SEPARATOR, STONER, WASHER
AND WHIZZER.

Capacity: 8 to 10 SACKS OF WHEAT
PER HOUR.

OCCUPIES SMALL SPACE.
ENTIRELY AUTOMATIC.

THOROUGHLY CLEANS DIRTY GRAIN, TAKING
AWAY MUD, STONES AND OTHER IMPURITIES.

THE AVANA CAKE CO., CARDIFF.
We are very pleased with the Wheat Washer and
Whizzer you supplied us some time ago. It washes and
dries the wheat beautifully. It has been in constant use here
since, and has given us no trouble.

For The Avana Cake Co., Ltd.,
J. DANIEL, Managing Director.

BOSHAM, SUSSEX.
The little time I have had your Washer I am well
satisfied with the machine, and shall be pleased to show it
to anyone you wish, by appointment.—S. C. GATEHOUSE.

ALFRED R. TATTERSALL & CO., 75, Mark Lane, London, E.C.

From *The Miller* March 2nd 1914

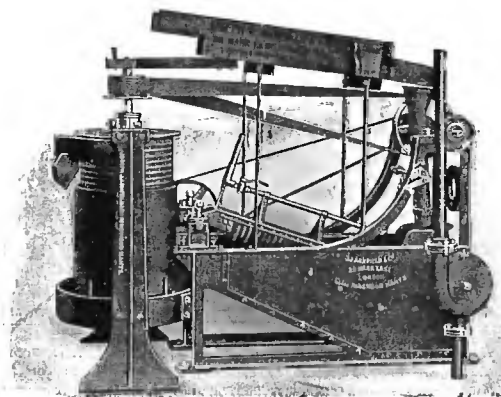
discs which are drilled with holes or pockets the exact size of a grain of wheat. Any grains of oats or barley being slightly longer than a grain of wheat cannot be contained in these pockets and are ultimately rejected by the machine.

Some folks may be surprised to know each grain of wheat possesses, in its original state, quite a healthy beard! The end of the grain which is nearest the stalk, when in the ear, contains the germ and, if the opposite end is examined carefully, several strong hairs can be observed at the extremity. However hygienic a beard may be when worn by the human male, the beard of the wheat grain does not seem conducive to hygiene when cleaning of the wheat is considered. It is here any dirt is caught and held and severe treatment is required from the mill scourer and separator to remove this beard and any dust adhering thereto. Those who uphold the old type stone ground flour made in a crude mill with little or no cleaning apparatus should note this adhering dirt and dust, together with much other foreign matter was ground with the wheat and most of it eventually found its way into the stone flour, probably giving it that nutty flavour that such faddists applaud. The reason why such old time flour did have a distinct flavour is, I believe, due to the fact that principally English wheat was used at that time and all experts are agreed on the fine flavour obtained from English wheat. Unfortunately, it does not produce that well piled, open crumb that the general public demand (in normal times). One other fact is worth mentioning, that is this type of bread many years ago was generally baked in a wood

heated oven - a type of oven now nearly extinct - where wood was burnt in the brick oven until sufficient heat was retained in the bricks, the wood ashes were cleaned out and the bread baked on the brick floor of the oven. Those who have ever eaten it, and I was brought up on it, will agree such bread has a flavour that cannot be surpassed.

To return to the subject of preparation of wheat for milling in the more modern mill, there is one other very important aspect to mention. Imported wheat as received from the grain producing countries is all too dry and brittle for successful milling, while English wheat is generally of too high a moisture content. The milling of the latter in its normal condition would be very unsatisfactory and the resulting flour would be too damp to keep sweet for any length of time. To gain a rough idea of the difference between imported and the home grown article, the hardest and biggest of the imported varieties may have as low a moisture content as 11 or 12%, while in an unfavourable harvest, such as the 1946 harvest, our home grown wheat may average between 18 or 20% while, in extreme cases, it may be in the region of 25% or over.

ARMFIELD'S GRAIN WASHER, STONER, RINSER & WHIZZER.



No. 2 Grain Washer, Stoner, Rinsers and Whizzer, with Separating Screen and Centrifugal Pump attached.

This Machine comprises a capacious Washing Tank, with Water Inlet; Stone and Mud Separator, Settling Tank and Outlet; Overhead Flush for the removal of light rubbish; Inclined Agitator, with Perforated Case and Propeller; Final Clean Water Rinsers and Flush, and Vertical Spiral Ventilated Whizzer.

Made in 6 sizes for capacities from 30 to 200 bushels per hour.

JOSEPH J. ARMFIELD & CO.,
Milling Engineers,

20, MARK LANE, LONDON. RINGWOOD, Hants.

From The Miller February 2nd 1914

It is evident then that moisture must be added to the imported wheat and moisture must be extracted from our home grown wheat to bring them both into that condition where the milling will be most satisfactory and the flour produced most acceptable to user and consumer alike.

The necessary addition of moisture to hard imported wheats, therefore, is made during the washing process for, while inner cleanliness may be first in the human being, preceding remarks will have given the impression that outer cleanliness is not at all times perfect with the flour miller's raw material. As it is quite impossible to mill high grade flour from any wheat that is not perfectly clean and as the thought of any impurity is quite repugnant to the modern flour miller, the wheat must be treated in the same way as grubby children are prepared for bed - soaked, washed, dried and warmed - but the injection of warm milk afterwards, while very necessary to the now spotless and sparkling youngster, is not considered in the best milling circles!

I will not weary the reader with a detailed description of the machines which carry out the processes of washing and drying, except to say the wheat, after a short immersion during which, incidentally, any stones are removed, is thrown very violently against a perforated metal cover by a revolving cylinder with blades called a 'whizzer' and most of the surplus moisture and impurities are removed by this centrifugal action. To cause the moisture on the outside of the grain to penetrate through the various skins or bran layers of the wheat berry to the endosperm or starchy centre of same, heat is necessary if the grain is to be quickly brought into milling condition. Practically the same result can be obtained by allowing the wheat to lay for 24 to 36 hours before milling but, as this necessitates much bin storage in a large mill, this method is not often used.

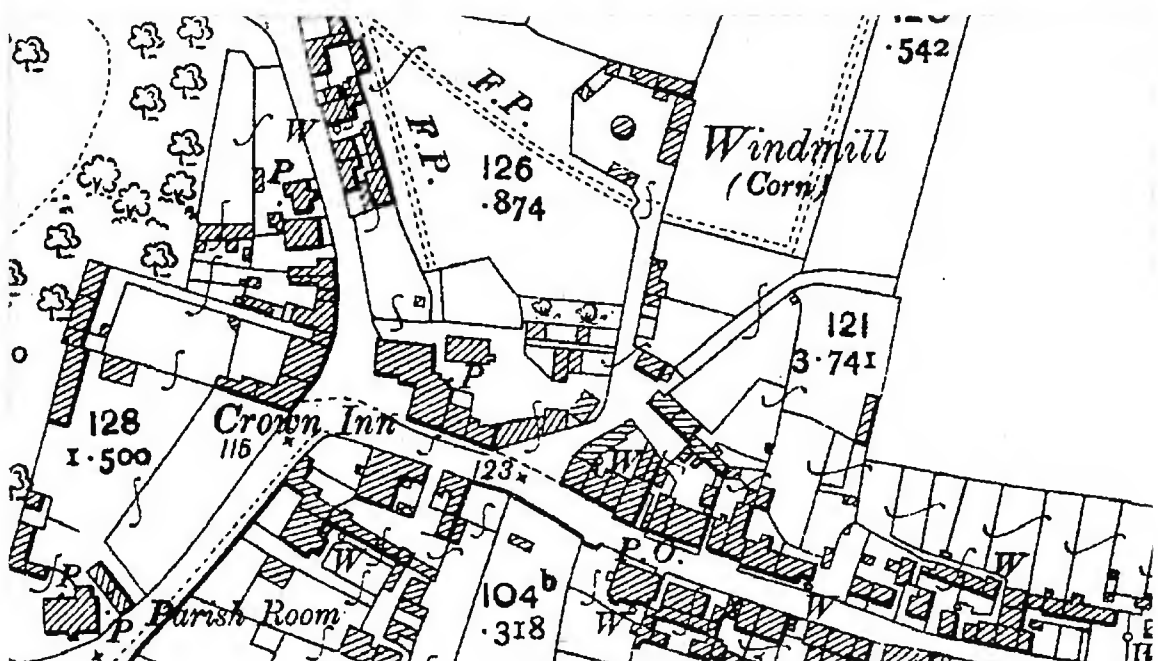
The conditioner or dryer is an expensive and delicate piece of machinery and all millers are not yet agreed on the best method for this process but, broadly speaking, the wheat is first heated by passing it over hot water radiators in the first section and is then subjected to currents of hot air for a further section, eventually being cooled off by cold air current in the lower section of this machine. The same machine can be used both as a conditioner (that is preparing washed wheat for the mill) and a dryer (extracting excessive moisture from very damp English wheat).

Between this process and the actual milling, come the further cleaning machines, for the removal of any other grain in the wheat as oats or barley, and small seeds as cockle and some outer coat of the wheat grain which has been loosened by the washing and conditioning it has received. Some outline of these machines has already been given on a previous page, so we journey on with the cleaned wheat to the mill proper, not I hope in exactly the same manner, for few of us are slim enough to ride along in a horizontal conveyor contained in trunking under one foot square!

Just before the wheat is passed on to the first roll in the mill, an automatic weigher is usually installed so that an exact record may be kept of all wheat going on to the mill.

MILLS ON THE MAP

A typical east Suffolk post mill stands proudly above the village of Coddenham in this fine view which must have been taken from the top of the church tower. The mill is therefore seen from the south-west. The outbuildings around the mill can be made out in the photograph. This was a tall mill with a three-storey roundhouse and unusually steep steps. It is reported to have been sold in 1908 for just £25, when still complete, and was demolished the following year. Part of the cobbled tramway and foundations could still be seen when Peter Dolman visited in 1978. The map is from the 1904 edition of the O.S. 25-inch survey (not to scale).



THIRTY YEARS ON – ANOTHER RECOLLECTION

Niall Roberts

May I add my own congratulations to those of others on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the founding of Suffolk Mills Group. I did not realise that my own interest in mills predates - just - the life of the Group (but not the activity of some of its members) until I looked again at the date '10/76' that I wrote inside the cover of the first hardback about windmills that I bought - *Windmills in England* by R.J. Brown - first published in that same year. I may be one of the first 'out-county' members of S.M.G..

My interest in mills began shortly before or soon after Wimbledon Windmill Museum was opened to the public in 1976. My wife Julie and I were members of the Wimbledon Society (then called the John Evelyn Society) which was concerned with protection of the historic character of Wimbledon and with the preservation of the older buildings in the town. The Society sought to foster a knowledge of and interest in both the built and natural environments through its Local History Museum and through talks during the winter and guided walks during the sunnier parts of the year - including walks on Wimbledon Common to look for particularly interesting trees, plants, fungi, birds and insects. In 1976 one of these outings was to the Windmill Museum.

That visit was organised by Norman Plastow the architect and model builder, and he gave an enthusiastic and enthusing talk about the history of windmills in general and about Wimbledon windmill in particular. He showed us and commented on the large collection of models of mainly English windmills (all of which he had made to the same scale), and on the sizeable collection of mill artefacts. I was infected by the mills bug for ever afterwards.

Shortly after that occasion, an enterprising friend of ours (who had all the stored-up organising ability and energy of a former contemplative Nun - which in fact she had been) invited us to come and share with her a house that she was looking after for a friend of hers in Aldeburgh. When we arrived, she had already spread out on a table half a dozen or so One-Inch O.S. maps covering Norfolk and Suffolk, with marker pins stuck into all the windmill sites recognised by the O.S. cartographers. We duly visited quite a few but we soon learnt that the O.S. only recognised mills that would be visible to someone like William Cobbett riding on a horse. It was probably during one of our successful visits to an open mill that I bought a copy of Brian Flint's *Windmills of East Anglia* and Jeffery Whitelaw's *Getting to know about Windmills*. I cannot now remember where but possible in a National Trust shop after tea and cake following a visit to a NT property, I bought a copy of John Vince's *Discovering Windmills*. Over the following years, I acquired copies of small county-based windmill booklets for Devon, Essex, Norfolk, Somerset, Sussex, Wiltshire and probably others.

It must have been during one of our successful Suffolk mill visits that I learnt of the existence of S.M.G. and of the Mills

Section of SPAB, both of which I joined. The bookstalls at the London meetings of the latter introduced me to the invaluable A4 county series on windmills by Arthur Smith (assisted in two volumes by Wilfred Seaby) later supplemented by the volumes in the same format on Suffolk and on Lincolnshire windmills by the late and much lamented Peter Dolman.

Because my original interest had been sparked in a windmill, for some time I was only interested in windmills. I dismissed watermills as inherently uninteresting because water was (nearly) always there, always flowed in the same direction and could be turned on and off by a 'tap' (the sluice gate). With Julie's help I planned windmill expeditions but never included watermills in the itinerary. However, having joined the SPAB Mills Section and then taken part in their Day Tours, I soon realised how much variation there was between mills, however a mill was powered, in tentering gear, stone-nut engagement/disengagement devices and in bell alarm arrangements. I had to acknowledge that watermills were interesting too. My collection of mill books grew and so did the inclusiveness of our privately arranged visits to mills (sometimes outside normal opening times). In planning these visits, the details on location, mill condition and owner/custodian telephone numbers in the literature were indispensable but those sources did not say anything about the likely reaction of an owner/custodian when approached 'cold' on the phone. Peter Dolman in particular was most helpful not only in suggesting mills worth visiting when I told him of a proposed journey, but also in warning or reassuring me about the personality of a few owner/custodians.

I have never done anything practical in the field of mill preservation (apart from politely pointing out to custodians that, in each of two watermills, the governor and its linkage to the millstones had been incorrectly connected). However I have always admired the devotion to the cause displayed by those of a more practical bent than I, such as those in the 'Heavy Gang' of Hampshire Mills Group and those who have taken part in the 'work-ins' (an odd name) organised by S.M.G.. Thelnetham windmill is one great tribute to their efforts.

We were very fortunate in having some family members working and living near Durham and others down in Dorset, with other more distant relatives living in between. The Mills Group leaflets on mill locations and opening times were most useful in planning family-related journeys. At one time I was a member of nearly all the Mills Groups in England and Wales and of one or two mill-linked Mill Friends as well. All our 'social' travelling came to have a large molinological component. Even funerals gave an opportunity for a mill visit, and one cousin actually asked me where I would like him to have his funeral so that at least one mill would reward me for attending an otherwise sad occasion! More recently, I was disappointed and mildly annoyed when our younger daughter and spouse moved from Durham to Dorset (where we already had family representation). As a result of that move, I allowed my membership of all the Mills Groups to lapse except for Essex and Suffolk, which, for old time's sake, I am reluctant to abandon.

I greatly regretted the collapse of Cambridgeshire Mills Group and of East Kent Mills Group. I welcomed the formation of the

North East and Wessex Mills Groups. I certainly hope that Suffolk Mills Group will find the committee members it needs in order to continue its thriving history.

NEWS

PAUL JOSLIN

Sadly we have to report the death of Paul Joslin at the end of March. He was 63. Paul had been warden of Buttrum's Mill at Woodbridge from 1998 until last summer when he fell ill. He greatly enjoyed the work and quickly became familiar with the mill and its history. Always jovial and optimistic, his background in teaching made him an ideal warden. He kept meticulous records of visitors and sales, and compiled a detailed statistical analysis at the end of each season. Paul was very fond of travel, and would often be seen reading a guidebook or studying a timetable in the quiet times at the mill. After recovering from a major operation in 2003 he joined his local church at Grundisburgh, and is buried in the churchyard. (M.B.)

TIM SLOANE

Tim Sloane died in January at the age of 60. As project officer for the Suffolk River Valleys Environmentally Sensitive Area, Tim was instrumental in obtaining ESA grants for important repair/conservation work to Reydon windpump, Burgh mill and Layham and Assington watermills. He had a deep knowledge of, and love for the area and he will be greatly missed. (M.B.)

TIDE MILL LOTTERY BID PROGRESS

The Stage 2 application for some £1M has now been made to the H.L.F.. If successful, this would leave £200,000 to be raised. Of this, £40,000 has already been pledged, with verbal offers of another £60,000. One aspect of the proposed work which is considered urgent is the replacement of the concrete slab or apron extending out into the river at mud level to the south of the mill. The existing apron is breaking up, putting the mill's foundations at risk, especially with the higher tidal levels predicted. Visitor numbers fell to just under 7,000 in 2007. It is hoped that, if the Lottery bid is successful, the rejuvenated mill will attract 15,000 visitors annually by 2010. A decision on the bid will be known later in the year. (M.B.)

NEWS FROM BUTTRUM'S MILL

The new season has started with a bang with visitor numbers well up on 2007 despite the cold Easter weather. So far there have been 89 visitors and 60 schoolchildren are due at the end of April. The sale of the freshly flaked oats and museli is going well at Woodbridge farmer's markets, although flour and bread mixes are a bit slow, but soon you will be able to get your oats at the windmill! We will be open to the general public every Saturday and Sunday from 1-5pm from 3rd May. Organised parties can be catered for at other times by ringing Keith Burton on 01394 411196. Come and see for yourself and be assured of a warm welcome. (K.B.)

THORINGTON STREET WATERMILL

I took over custodianship of the mill from Peter Dolman in August 1996. No major work has been carried out since Peter's restoration work between 1987 and 1994. A major clearance of the tailrace was carried out with volunteers and a local school party in February 1997 and on a regular basis since, mainly by myself although I do get assistance on occasions.

The waterwheel is run whenever time allows during the period April to October when the water level is raised although no milling has taken place.

Over the years there have been proposals by the agents for the Tendring Hall Estate, the mill's owners, to carry out various works. Unfortunately these have not come to fruition. A number of repairs are now needed, one of which is to clean down the weatherboarding and replace any decayed boards in preparation for painting. It is planned to scaffold the mill for this work, with some degree of urgency to the front of the mill as the narrow roadway would be obstructed during this time. Work is being planned for September this year. Any volunteer labour to assist would be appreciated.

During the winter months out of the fishing season, when the water level is drained down, I have been preparing to clear the build-up of silt from the tailrace to help prevent backwatering of the wheel. Levels through the race have been taken to indicate the depth of silt. Over half the length of the race needs to be dug out, but not to a great depth. The waterwheel sluice gate, gate sill and portcullis all require attention. Unfortunately I have been beaten by time this year as the water level is now raised. The work will now be carried forward to next winter.

Any member interested in helping at this outstanding mill can contact me at Clovelly, School Lane, Lawford, Manningtree CO11 2HZ (telephone 01206 393836). (Bob Starling)

BARDWELL WINDMILL ATTRACTIONS FOR 2008

Work has continued over the past year and the first of the four sails has been completed, together with a full set of 192 shutters. Sponsors are still being sought for some shutters, so it's not too late to put your name, or a friend's, on one.

There will be a special open day on Sunday 11th May from 10.30am to 5.30pm, when it is hoped there will be visits from the Long Sutton Vintage Cycle Club, the Little Egypt Morris Men and some vintage cars, as well as plants, crafts, tombola and some tasty home baking.

On Sunday 17th August the popular Threshing Day will be held in the field opposite the mill (weather permitting). Oliver the traction engine will work a threshing drum, there will be displays of vintage vehicles and steam engines, and breadmaking demonstrations at the mill.

The well known village art exhibition takes place in the Tithe Barn on Saturday 13th and Sunday 14th September, accompanied by demonstrations and refreshments. For further details of this or any of the above telephone 01359 251331.

PAKENHAM WATERMILL IN 2008

The old kitchen in the miller's house has now been restored, featuring an 18th century bread oven and brewing vat, providing something new to see for 2008. National Mills Weekend will be celebrated on May 10th-11th, June 29th sees the Vintage Power Day, and free admission will operate on Heritage Weekend (September 13th-14th). The mill is open on weekend afternoons (1.30-5pm) and Thursdays (10am-4pm) until the end of September, and also during Half Term weeks (May 26th-30th and October 25th-31st). There are milling demonstrations on the first Thursday morning of the month.

SPROUGHTON MILL

In March planning and listed building applications were made for the conversion of Sproughton watermill to a single dwelling. Externally little change is proposed, with the existing pattern of small-paned casement windows and blind brick panels being maintained. Inside, the main structural alteration is the proposed removal of the entire second floor, owing to limitations on headroom. The machinery has been long removed, apart from remains of the sack hoist in the roofspace, although parts of the hursting and the stone bearers can still be seen. Access will be via the meadow on the opposite side of the river, the final approach being on foot, across a new bridge.

The mill has had a chequered history in recent years, especially after it changed hands in 1995. Indeed, permission for house conversion was granted in the mid 1990's but of course this has lapsed. The mill and meadow are now in the hands of the Trustees in Bankruptcy, and it is envisaged that the property will be marketed once the necessary consents are in place. (M.B.)



Sproughton mill in November 1996, much as today

EVENTS

HERRINGFLEET WINDPUMP OPEN DAY: SUNDAY MAY 11th from 1-4.30pm

We very much hope that Herringfleet windpump can be maintained in working order now that the 50-year term of the County Council's lease has expired. The future for the mill remains uncertain, but we intend to run it as long as we can, so that its unique status can be appreciated. This open day marks National Mills Weekend, and we hope the weather will allow the sails to turn and the cloths on them to stay dry!

VISIT TO SWEFFLING MILLS: SUNDAY JUNE 8th from 2.30pm

There are remains of three post windmills close together in Sweffling, on high ground north-east of the church (see Newsletters 90 and 95). Sweffling Mills comprised Middle Mill (demolished c.1900 leaving the roundhouse, converted into a house), High Mill (demolished 1912, some visible remains) and a steam mill in between (some visible remains). The site is owned by S.M.G. member Peter Greene, and we will meet at the Middle Mill roundhouse which is adjacent to the minor north-south road linking Sweffling and Rendham (Grid Ref. 359640).

After looking at the sites of High Mill and the steam mill, we will take a short walk to the roundhouse of Girling's Mill which is preserved complete with the trestle. The roundhouse was built as late as 1901, and the mill above it taken down in 1935.

ESSEX MILLS GROUP VISIT TO LAYHAM WATERTMILL: THURSDAY JULY 10th at 7.30pm

Our member David Pearce will be running the mill for Essex Mills Group, and any S.M.G. member who wishes to come along is welcome.

S.M.G. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING: SUNDAY JULY 27th at KERSEY MILL, commencing 11am

Our meeting will be held in the converted malting at the mill, an extremely comfortable and well appointed venue. In the afternoon there will be an opportunity to look inside the watermill, which is of great molinological interest. Highlights include a fine Poncelet wheel, six pairs of millstones on two parallel hurst frames, and extensive late 19th century improvements with conveyors, elevators, dressing machines and a dust extraction system. As an added attraction there will be a rally by the Vintage Car Club of Great Britain, with some 50 old vehicles converging on the mill!

Kersey Mill is less than a mile off the A1071 Hadleigh bypass, on the A1141 Lavenham road.

VIDEO OF FELIXSTOWE ROLLER MILL: WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 8th at 7.30pm

This is a Suffolk Industrial Archaeology Society meeting to be held at Castle Hill Community Centre, Highfield Road, Ipswich. Ian Heeley will show a video compilation of the final days and recent demolition of the mill, plus images of the port over the years.
