

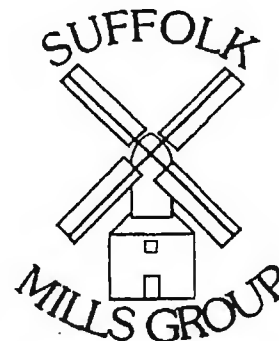
SUFFOLK MILLS GROUP

Newsletter

www.suffolkmills.org.uk

No. 101
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Editor: MARK BARNARD
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The summer, which started so brightly in May, seems to have gone downhill ever since, and now it's over - as I write it is decidedly autumnal. The National Mills Sunday was fine but unfortunately wind was in short supply, and Herringfleet windpump lifted very little water although at least the sails were turning most of the time. We were disappointed with the small turnout for the June visit to the Sweffling post mill roundhouses, a pity because we were warmly received at both. On a positive note, the A.G.M. at Kersey Mill was the best attended for years, with a rare chance to see one of Suffolk's most important mills.

A very thought-provoking editorial by Geraldine Mathieson in the latest Lincolnshire Mills Group newsletter highlights the recent changes in the milling industry, which is being concentrated in fewer and larger buildings, leaving many dockside roller mills redundant. While many have already gone, it is sobering to read that 'the high cost of demolition is all that keeps some still standing'. Is it realistic to attempt to preserve a 20th century roller mill when so many earlier traditional mills are still under threat? I am sure a case can be made, but a lot of research would have to be done to identify suitable candidates, and then - how is preservation actually achieved? Listing is unlikely, scheduling a possibility but given the scale and complexity of roller mills, the only way physical preservation might be possible would be to persuade a sympathetic milling firm to keep one such plant running beyond its 'sell by' date. I think 'preservation by recording' is more realistic, and S.M.G. and others made a video record of the last working days of the now demolished dock roller mill at Felixstowe (see Events below).

Forthcoming events are summarised below. The next issue is due in January 2009.

SMG visit to Baylham watermill	Sunday October 5th
SIAS talk/video on Felixstowe mill	Wednesday October 8th
Herringfleet windpump open day	Sunday October 12th
SPAB Mills Section autumn meeting	Saturday November 8th
SMG social evening, Ipswich	Saturday December 6th

Mark Barnard

REPORT OF 2008 A.G.M.

The 2008 A.G.M. was held at Kersey Mill on Sunday July 27th, by kind permission of Rodney and Christina Kerr. 36 members and friends attended. Apologies were received from David Barton, David Blackburn, Sue Burden, John and Madeleine Ford, Ed Goatcher, Patricia Parr, Bob Paterson, Bob Sharp. Peter Steggall, Enid Wheeler and Chris Wilson.

Chris Hullcoop welcomed everyone to Kersey Mill and outlined its past history. Mark Barnard then read the minutes of the 2007 meeting in Newsletter 98. These were accepted as a true record (proposed Chris Armour, seconded Penny Berry).

Des Codd presented the accounts for 2007. Expenditure exceeded income by just over £300, mainly due to grants to work on mills. The overall balance of just over £11,000 was still healthy, and most of the deposited funds have been transferred to another account earning much more interest. Jack Clover queried the low interest on capital, and it was explained that the transfer only occurred half way through the year. Chris Armour asked if there were any plans for using the money. Chris Hullcoop said we want to make further small grants to some mills, and it would also be nice to support a publication on Suffolk mills. The accounts were accepted (proposed John Snowdon, seconded Chris Armour. (Note: A small correction is required under 'Payments' where the item 'Syleham mill (C.Hullcoop)' should read 'Lamp for video camera'.))

The editor Mark Barnard reported that three newsletters have been produced in the last year, culminating in the 100th issue. The time of publication has slipped a little owing to an extended period of convalescence in the first few months of 2008. There had been the usual mix of articles, and an encouraging response to the plea for more material. The format and production remain unchanged, but the Amstrad word processor is starting to fail. The other publishing venture is the Group's website. This has recently been re-designed, but the content is still very limited, and it must be regarded as a work in progress. Bob Malster proposed a vote of thanks to the editor; this was seconded by Des Codd. John Snowdon proposed that the vote of thanks be extended to the rest of the committee, and this was seconded by Roy Berry. The editor's report was accepted (proposed Brian Flint, seconded Chris Armour).

Chris Hullcoop gave the secretary's report. The number of members is more or less unchanged. Totals at February 2008 were 154, plus 2 complimentary and 10 newsletter exchange. We have recruiting posters in many mills, plus the web site and the mills tourism leaflet. Roy Berry asked about closer co-operation with the Essex Mills Group. Chris Hullcoop said that it was difficult to dovetail visits unless mills are close to the common border. Roy Berry said when a joint visit had been arranged to Ashdon post mill in 2006, S.M.G. members were very thin on the ground.

On the local media, Chris Hullcoop had found Radio Suffolk to be less encouraging than in the past, when John Eley produced a number of interviews at mills including Stanton and Thelnetham. We have done some work with Eddie Anderson for Anglia TV, including a piece in February 2008.

Election of the committee followed. Mrs Lock from Thorndon had expressed an interest in helping with our work and it was agreed to invite her to the next committee meeting (proposed Melanie Dolman, seconded Rosie Hayward). The existing officers and other committee members were re-elected en bloc (proposed Chris Armour, seconded Penny Berry).

Under Any Other Business, Chris Hullcoop drew attention to the limited capacity of the Group compared to the days of restoring

Thelnetham mill, which he described as 'an incredible coming together of members and other enthusiasts'. Several members own their own mill and they can use the Group to draw other members to a particular mill for practical work.

The meeting concluded with Rodney Kerr describing his plans for the Kersey Mill site, and Chris Hullcoop giving his customary review of mills in the news during the last year.

THE MILLS OF BURY ABBEY Bob Malster

One of the wealthiest Benedictine abbeys in the country, Bury Abbey owned vast estates not only in the eight and a half hundreds of the Liberty, the whole of West Suffolk, but also further afield in Norfolk and even in Northamptonshire. And on many of its manors there was a mill, or in some cases more than one.

Antonia Gransden writes of these monastic mills in an appendix to her new book *A History of the Abbey of Bury St Edmunds 1182-1256*, published recently by the Boydell Press. Of course she retells the well-known story of how Herbert the dean enraged Abbot Samson by erecting a windmill at the Haberdun in Bury St Edmunds and was forced to demolish it; the abbot considered that the new windmill would take trade from his own watermill on the Lark.

The dean was among the pioneers of the windmill, but his mill did not last very long in the face of Abbot Samson's wrath. However, the building of mills, and especially windmills, on the abbey estates proceeded apace from the late 12th century onwards. A survey made in 1279-80 reveals that there were by then windmills at Great Barton, Bradfield Monachorum, Chevington, Elmswell, Elvedon, Hawstead, Hinderclay, Horringer, Risby, Rougham, Great Saxham and Little Saxham, Whepstead and Woolpit, while Brockford had two windmills. At Cockfield, Nowton and Stowlangtoft windmills seemed to have replaced earlier watermills, and in other places new watermills had been built.

The author says that the evidence makes it clear that a policy of constructing windmills on St Edmunds Abbey estates was adopted in the late 12th century and pursued with vigour in the first half of the 13th, at the same time that the great neighbouring abbeys of Ely, Peterborough and Ramsey were all pursuing the same policy. The principal reason for this burst of windmill building was economic, mills being seen as a lucrative asset that could bring in revenue to the abbey.

In one case this revenue helped to support the monks at Bury who produced those wonderful illuminated manuscripts for which the abbey was well known. Two watermills at West Stow were assigned to the precentor to pay for parchment and ink for the monks. Abbot Anselm also granted a mill at Sidoluesmere (could that be Sicklesmere, between Bury and Sudbury?) to the convent to provide support for the infirmary.

The extent to which a manorial lord might benefit from the ownership of mills is shown by contemporary records from Ely. In 1222 the Bishop of Ely received £37 3s 4d income from his mills, but in 1298, after the building of numerous windmills, the income

had risen to £192 2s 10d, a very considerable sum. Accounts from Bury in the mid 13th century record the cost of building a new windmill at West Stow as £7 6s 5½d.

The majority of the monastic mills were employed in the grinding of corn, but one of several watermills held by the abbey at Icklingham was a fulling mill, using for the cleansing and processing of the woollen cloth produced in Suffolk in medieval times. In 1282 the sacrist of the abbey, William of Hoo, granted Robert the fuller and his wife Cecilia a life-lease of the mill for an annual rent of 24s. This agreement stipulated that if ever a defect in the leat leading to the sacrist's mill resulted in the miller losing 'multure', Robert and Cecilia had to make amends, and if the leat to the fulling mill were ever maliciously interfered with by the miller so that the fulling mill could not operate the sacrist had to make amends.

There is much in this scholarly book that is of interest to mill enthusiasts, but Antonia Gransden seems to show a certain unfamiliarity with mills. She writes, for instance, that 'until cast iron could be used to replace wood for the construction of sailyards, the number of sails was limited to four and their length to about 35 feet; when iron was used the sails could be longer and more numerous.' It sounds as if she might be suggesting that cast iron was used for the stocks or whips, but she cannot really mean that, can she?

She is also all at sea when she writes of the Domesday record that St Edmunds held 'half of one sea-weir and the fourth part of another half' and links this entry to the 'half mill' at Southwold that Abbot Samson rented to Henry son of Thurston towards the end of the 12th century. She assumes that sea-weirs powered waterwheels; in fact they were elaborate fish traps.

WINDMILLS: A NINETEENTH CENTURY APPRECIATION

The following extract is taken from *A Holiday on the Road* by James John Hissey, published in 1887. We thought it worth including as an unusually early and atmospheric appreciation of a working post mill, in Sussex (Argos Hill?). The piece was contributed by Ralph Gilbey.

Sussex is a veritable land of windmills; and very pleasing and characteristic features these are in the landscape, giving life and never-failing interest to the scene. Approaching Mayfield, we entered upon the heart of a windmill country. Hereabouts they seem to abound. One standing boldly out against the sky especially attracted us. Had Don Quixote passed this way, I feel sure that he would not have been able to have resisted the temptation to tilt at it.

Windmills vary greatly in design; this we soon discovered in making sketches of them. The oldest are the most picturesque, but the least profitable commercially; the most beloved of artists, the least admired by their owners. In the most ancient and primitive style, the whole structure of the mill bodily moves on a huge swivel, and is turned by a long lever behind. Of course this

necessitates a constant watchfulness on the part of the miller in order to keep the sails facing the wind. Of this kind is the one I have given in my illustration facing page 84. The next advance was to make this lever work upon a wheel-carriage, which automatically keeps the mill in proper position by means of a circular fan-sail placed upon it. This interesting class is very rare nowadays. In the last most familiar and most improved style, the body of the mill is a stationary structure, and only the top portion moves. So have we traced out the evolution of windmills to their latest perfection.

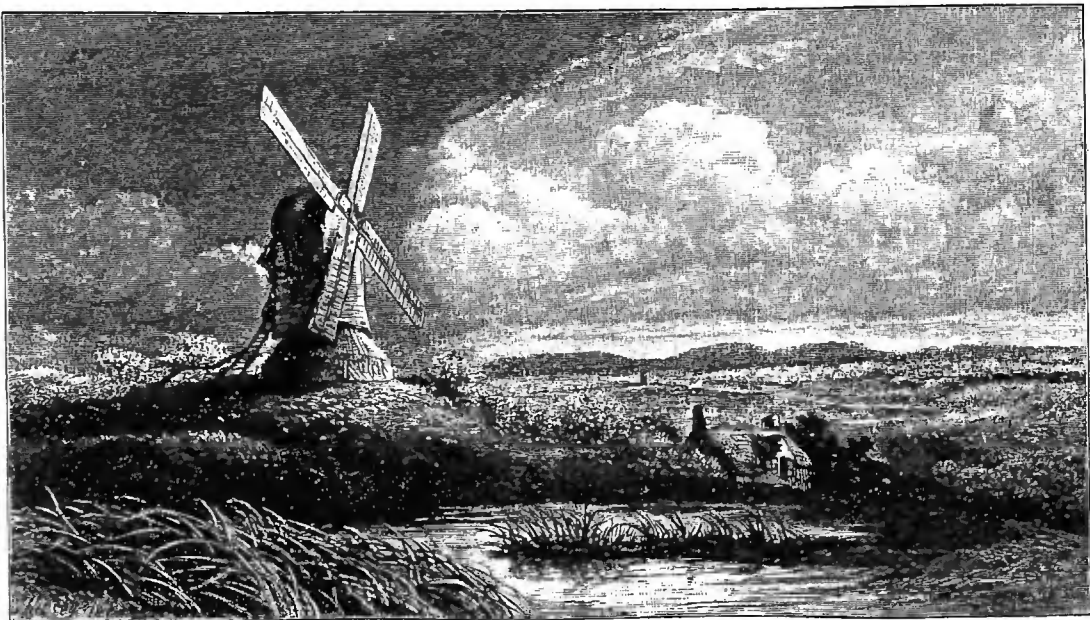
Taking our camera with us, we mounted the hill and proceeded to take a photograph of the ancient structure - for this was not one 'with all modern improvements' - the miller watching our proceedings, from out of a narrow slit in the building that did duty for a window, with evident interest. A strong breeze was blowing, and the sails were circling round and round, churning the air at a high rate of speed; so we ventured to ask him if he would mind stopping these just for half a minute whilst we took his mill. To our agreeable surprise he nodded a Yes, and presently the sails began to revolve slower and slower, till they stopped altogether. Then we uncapped our lens, and once more the sails commenced circling round and round on their endless task.

We had never been inside a mill, so, packing up our photographic tools, we begged permission to take a glance at the interior, which was readily granted. We found climbing up the long flight of rickety wooden steps almost as difficult as ascending the companion-way of a ship at sea, for the wind shook the old mill, causing the ladder to twist about first one way and then another; and no handrails were provided for the unaccustomed visitor. Entering the rocking structure, we presently found our sea-legs - or was it our mill-legs? What a noise, racket, and dust there was inside! These, with the unpleasant motion, made our visit hardly as agreeable as we anticipated. Noting our looks, the miller remarked: 'She rocks about a good deal to-day. You see there's a high wind on, and she's running hard; and like a good many of us she's not so young nor strong as she was. But, bless you! you should just be in her in the winter when it's blowing a regular storm; she rocks then, I can tell you. Sometimes I don't quite like it myself, and I clears out. You see, she's old; my grandfather built her when he was a young man, and that's many years gone by; and the whole mill is supported upon a single centre-beam, so if that should give way the whole concern would blow right over. Such things do happen.' Just then an extra blast struck the ancient mill, the machinery rattled on at an increased speed, and the structure quivered just as a ship does when struck by a sea. Indeed, for the moment we thought of 'clearing out' too. Then the miller said, 'I must put the brake on, or she may run herself a-fire.' Externally these old mills are certainly the most picturesque, and as an artist I delight in them; but still, I think, were I a miller, I would rather have the less picturesque and more stable modern structure. But the miller was evidently in love with his old mill. 'It served my father and my grandfather well,' he said, 'and it keeps me a-going; I wouldn't have her altered. Besides, sometimes the tops get blown off the stationary ones. No, she'll last me out, I hopes, though she does strain a

good deal in storms. You see, we are terribly exposed up here; we generally has a breeze more or less on the closest days; it's no good building a mill in a sheltered spot. I often works her on when I see others standing still.' Then he took us round and explained everything, and it was evident that he was very proud of his possession. We were not sorry to get outside again, to stand once more upon terra firma, and to escape from all the din and racket. It was a new experience for us, that noisy quarter of an hour in that rickety old mill.

The exterior view of the mill was certainly the most pleasing. We sat down for a while watching its outspread arms, dark and clearly outlined against the white sunlit sky, watching as they turned majestically round and round in mighty sweeps - the very poetry of motion. What is it, I wonder, that is so fascinating, so impressive, about a windmill steadily and slowly at work, as seen sharply silhouetted against the bright white sky - the mighty swirling, the ceaseless circling of those gigantic arms, without steam or any visible power - arms ever rising and falling in a never-completed journey?

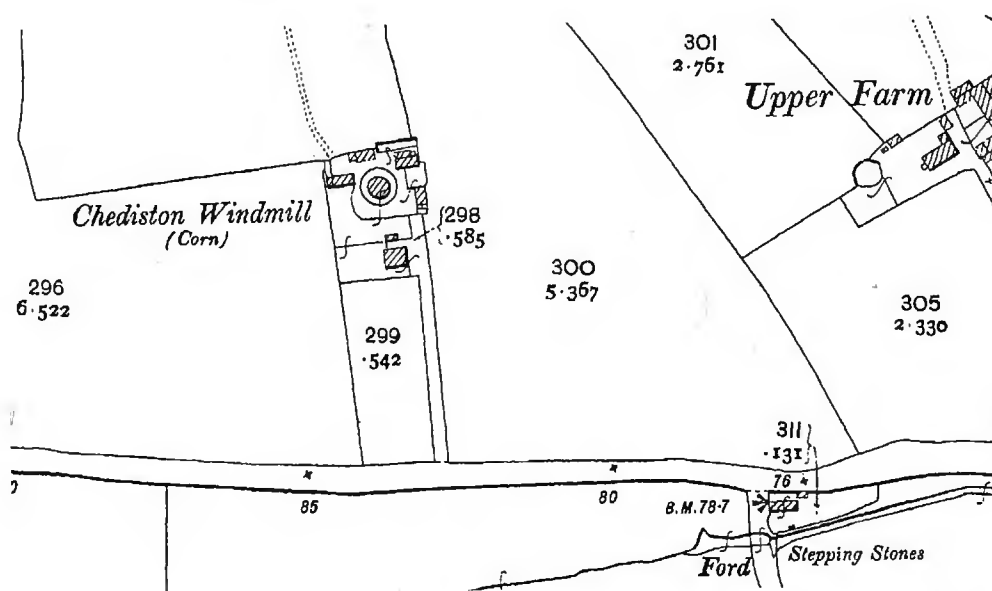
The windmill, both by its necessary prominent position and the motion of its sails, powerfully asserts itself. It is astonishing how any movement in the landscape at once attracts the eye and rivets the attention. But in a rural panorama, except perhaps a distant train and the few windmills that have not yet been improved away by steam, there is little of life or movement to be observed. I have often looked over a vast extent of country from one of the commanding spurs of the South Downs, and seen no sign of movement save the many windmills scattered every here and there. From this vantage-ground I have counted nearly twenty of these at a time, mostly at work; now light in the sunshine, now dark in shade, but always charming features in the prospect, life-giving and eye-delighting. One never wearies of windmills.



A Sussex Windmill (from A Holiday on the Road)

MILLS ON THE MAP

This issue's map (1904 edition of the 25-inch O.S., not to scale) shows Chediston tower mill near Halesworth. The mill stood up a steep track off the Halesworth to Harleston road, so steep in fact that loads had to be divided to allow the horses to pull them up! Evidently an old mill, the tower had very little batter and the sails swept close to the ground - a child was hit and killed in 1818. The photograph was taken from the south-east and the mill house, the building to the right and the line of the track tally with the map. The mill was reported to be working with just two broken sails in c.1895, and was pulled down by Amos Clark in 1925. The date of the photograph is not known, but it is assumed the mill was fully repaired after suffering very serious storm damage in 1879, and only went down to two sails sometime later.



LIVING ON (ALMOST) NOTHING! Reg Clover

This feature was first published in the *Eastern Daily Press* on November 28th 1959, and is one of a short series contributed by Reg's son, Jack Clover. The milling business referred to was of course at Drinkstone Mills.

When heading this article, the exclamation mark on my typewriter hovered for a moment in mid-air, because it seemed so nearly a truthful statement; a four-word summary of a state of living not possible, alas, in these days though well within living memory.

This writing all came about through the chance remark of a friend who said that his grandfather as a child, and one of a large family living in impoverished times, had had to sit down at table 'three to a herring' (the remark had become a catch phrase in that family) and that there was argument among them on who should have the centre portion. Herrings at that time were two for three-halfpence.

It set me thinking of my own grandparents, and the incredibly low costs not only of living but of running a small country business generally.

My grandfather was a country miller and on baking day - always on a Friday - my grandmother would go into the mill and scoop from a sack about a stone of stone-ground flour. The flour can be said to have cost nothing, because my grandfather, besides making flour and selling it to householders in the neighbourhood, also brought in many coombs of wheat from farmers and gleaners for grinding and separating afterwards into flour, midds and bran, and he always took eight pounds out of each sack as a long recognised and legitimate 'toll'.

All the baking for the week was done in a huge brick oven, still familiar in the memory of the older generation, and the cost of heating could be claimed as nothing because the faggot serving that purpose was cut from tree tops and hedges growing on the place. The oven itself was probably a hundred years old and good for another fifty.

The kitchen was maintained for next to nothing, the walls being whitewashed and the floor scrubbed with a long-handled broom with water drawn cold from a pump, the waste water being urged through a hole cut through the ground sill at floor level and so finding its way to a drain outside.

My grandfather had two windmills in one yard, and a few pounds of grease and some tallow for the gears would keep them running for years. I do not think he ever used a lubricating oil, and would probably have considered it wasteful stuff. A pair of millstones grinding wheat would last half a lifetime. For all that nothing was thrown away until it was quite useless. At one time the vee-grooved wooden pulley wheel on the sack-lifting tackle became so worn that it failed to grip the driving chain properly and so a new one was made, but it stood on its edge on the ground floor of the mill for forty years before it was used. By that time

the worm had begun to get into it. Paint, made of white lead and linseed oil, was mixed on the place.

Mill transport was provided by two large square carts, made after the miller's fashion and painted yellow; yellow did not show the road dirt particularly. Running costs were practically nil, the only requirements being an occasional dab of grease on the axles and new band tyres shrunk on the wheel rims every dozen years or so.

I never saw these carts as new, but they seemed to suffer little deterioration as year followed year, yet it is strange fact that when one of them was replaced with a lorry many years after my grandfather's time it soon fell to pieces when left outside exposed to all the weather.

The horses drawing the carts were huge creatures and probably equal in weight to the loads they pulled at a steady three miles an hour. In winter much of the driver's time was spent in walking beside his horse's head to keep himself warm.

The cost of feeding the horses was practically nothing. My grandfather owned a meadow permanently down to grass and an average of a week spent in cutting, making and carting the hay to a stack near the stables would keep the horses provided with provender for the remaining 51 weeks in the year.

The five or six pounds of crushed oats given to each horse every day was obtained still more cheaply, for my grandfather took four pounds out of every sack of oats ground or crushed for customers (here I must repeat myself) as a long recognised and legitimate 'toll'. When the grass in the meadow was growing long and into hay the horses grazed the extensive enclosed area all round the windmills and so kept all nice and tidy.

When I saw a lorry leaving the mill yard the other day I thought of what it cost in road tax, petrol tax and insurance before it could turn a wheel, and I wondered what my grandfather would have made of it. He would have said he could see no sense in it.

And what would my grandmother have thought of household costs today? She would have wondered what things were coming to. They would not, I am sure, have changed their span of life in the nineteenth century for the twentieth, except possibly on two counts: painless dentistry and advanced surgery.

NEWS

WEDDING BELLES

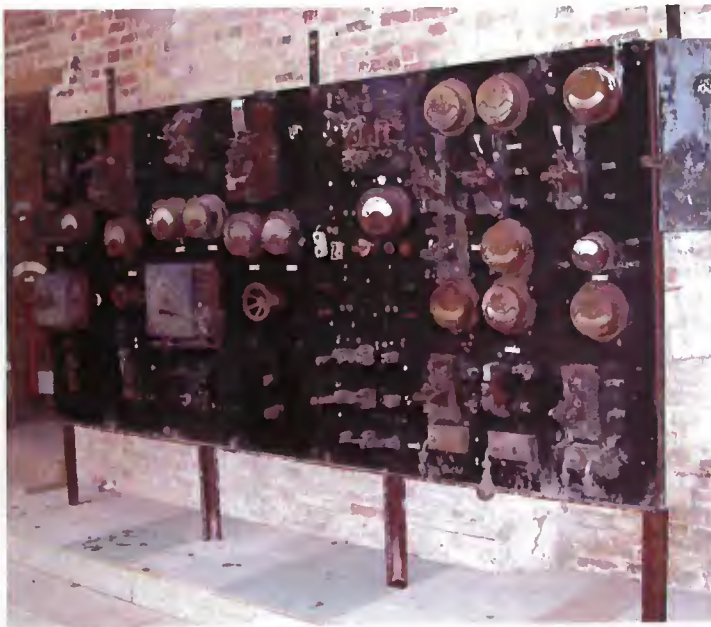
Congratulations are due to S.M.G. committee member Bob Paterson, who married Lucy at Cley mill in Norfolk on August 9th. We offer Bob and Lucy our best wishes for a long and happy marriage.

PROGRESS AT PARKER'S MILL, MILDENHALL

Work on the first phase of the development, the conversion of the mill building into 14 luxury apartments, has been completed, and most are now sold or reserved, good going in the current market.



Parker's Mill: the 1908 range (12th June 2008)



The re-sited switchgear panel

The apartments, which include four duplex penthouses, have exposed interior brick walls, electric underfloor heating and electricity generated by the refurbished Gilkes water turbine. The conversion also includes office space on the ground floor, in the lobby of which is the early slate-mounted switchgear panel salvaged from the demolished outbuildings. This dates from the early decades of the 20th century when the mill was used to generate electricity for the surrounding area. Although not listed, the mill has been sympathetically

treated, with retention of the original single-glazed cast iron windows (and new ones to match), careful repair of the brickwork with no heavy cleaning, and retention of features such as the modern external hoist on the road end of the 1887 range. The two storey lean-to at the rear of the 1908 range had to be reconstructed, re-using the old bricks wherever possible.

The developers, Freshwater Estates, kindly agreed to donate some of the wooden ladders from the mill to other Suffolk mills. On June 1st, with the help of Gerry Kane and his brother, we transported five of these fine (and very heavy!) ladders, delivering one to Ixworth watermill and the remainder to Stansfield tower mill, where only one of the original ladders is safe enough to use. (M.B.)

RETURN TO SYLEHAM

Many of you will remember that I broke my left arm in a ladder fall last July which caused work at Syleham mill to cease abruptly. Last October with my arm out of plaster we were able to fit a strong plastic tarpaulin to keep the mill watertight throughout the winter months. After much physiotherapy my arm and hand are working well but I still have considerable weakness in the shoulder.

By May I felt I would be able to work at the mill again but the weather was doing all it could to prevent me. The remaining eight panels of the steep cone 'wigwam' protecting the post were released from their plastic cover and the ready-cut aluminium panels nailed into place. They proved very likely to fly like kites in even a light wind and many days were lost as the mill occupies a well winded site. The very top of the post required 20 small pieces of aluminium and was topped off by a disc, all with good all round overlap. Thus in all the cone required 41 pieces of aluminium, all fitted with joints/overlaps sealed with aircraft quality Sikaflex sealing and bonding material. Rather than leave the aluminium self-coloured and ready to weather to the soft grey cathedral roof finish seen on many of Suffolk's small historic buildings, it was coated with black bituminous paint. This has proved effective on the main part of the roof and looks well.



Chris Hullcoop painting the cone (23rd July 2008)

We then attended to the engine shed housing the fine 12 H.P. single cylinder and single flywheel Ruston engine, now unseized and in working order. The matchboarding covering was not too bad, but for maintenance-free long life we decided to give it a second skin of galvanised corrugated steel. At first we thought of new steel on the roof and re-used pieces on the walls. It seemed wrong though to use a wall covering more than half way through its life, so all new was used. Like the mill the engine house was also coated with black bituminous paint and altogether we used all of a 25 litre drum.

While all this was under way, I was able to watch the work of the farm and share with Ivor and Andrew Wingfield the anxieties over the weather. It is a small farm of some 150 acres, mainly wheat, barley and 1,000 or so pigs. For a 'towny' it was most enlightening to ride in that most formidable of machines, the combine harvester. Seeing the pigs loaded into the transporter for their final journey to the factory at Haverhill meant an early start at 5.00am.

During the one or two weeks between harvest and ploughing, farmers have to control the rabbit population by an after dark stubble or lamp shoot which I was invited to join. The rabbits do not freeze in the powerful light beams and you need to be a very good shot to hit a fast running rabbit from a moving truck. Some 40 rabbits were ready for market the next day, giving local people a tasty dish at a fair price.

Behind the mill house is a nice old barn where I could see that a little first aid now would allow it to survive a few more years. Some years ago Ivor had bought some boards and he promised



The re-clad engine shed. The low structure to the right covers some of the major buck timbers. The barn is just visible to the right of the house. (1st September 2008)

to pay for any materials I used. I could not resist the temptation to 'have a go' and the old barn responded very well to the treatment and is now watertight.

The Syleham mill site is very important and well worth its listing. It is probably the most interesting roundhouse in Britain with its clay lump walls and complete trestle, all fully protected. It contains millstones on a hurst frame, all ready to work, and just needs a new belt to complete the drive from the oil engine. As well as the workable millstones there is some unique ancillary machinery by Martin of Beccles, the only example of their work left today. Also preserved in the roundhouse are the head and tail stones, the brake and tail wheels and sprattle beam, etc all from the post mill buck. Outside under a sturdy cover are preserved the crowntree, weather and tail beams.

Syleham mill is now preserved in a way that will be maintenance free and long lasting. Perhaps one day someone will live there who would produce a little flour as an interesting hobby. Today the owners would be quite willing to allow an enthusiast to use the mill to produce some stoneground flour. If anyone might be interested in milling, or even in just getting the splendid engine running again, do contact me on 01394 671462. (Chris Hullcoop)

TIDE MILL LOTTERY BID REJECTED

Woodbridge Tide Mill Trust's bid for nearly £1M of lottery funding for work to the mill has been unsuccessful. HLF's Regional Committee agreed that the project would deliver valuable heritage and public benefits, that it was well planned, and had potential to generate a great deal of community interest. Although the mill was not presently at risk, they recognised that intervention was needed if this was to be avoided. However, they thought the total cost was comparatively high in relation to the benefits to be achieved, and represented less good value for money in a competitive environment. Plans for corn grinding were likely to be an important attraction for visitors, but it was noted that this formed a large element of the project costs, not directly related to the conservation needs of the building.

The Trust may decide to make a new application, subject to advice from the HLF. Work on the mill is certainly needed, especially with the risk to the foundations caused by tidal scour (see last newsletter). It is therefore encouraging that Woodbridge Town Council, the mill's owners, has just decided to allocate £50,000 towards repairs. (M.B.)

CRANFIELD'S TOWER TOPPED OUT

On Tuesday September 9th the 23-storey tower of the Cranfield's Mill redevelopment in Ipswich was topped out. At 71.4m (234ft) high, it is the tallest building in the region. The £70M development, to be known as The Mill, will comprise 330 apartments, a hotel, restaurants, bars and dance studios for Dance East. Conversion of the original roller mill building fronting the Wet Dock has yet to start, and this is now dwarfed by the new buildings. Completion is due in October 2009. (M.B.)

S.M.G. WEBSITE

We have recently re-designed our website www.suffolkmills.org.uk but there is still a lot of information and images we could add. We would especially welcome feedback from members on the present content and ease of use, and any thoughts on how the site should be developed further. Also, if you think you could help in some way, please let us know. Contact Bob Paterson on 01473 749556 or windmillbob@hotmail.com

EVENTS

S.M.G. VISIT TO BAYLHAM WATERMILL; SUNDAY OCTOBER 5th from 2.30pm

Baylham is one of the few complete Suffolk mills we have never visited, although the SPAB Mills Section included it on their 1994 weekend tour. It is the last complete mill on the River Gipping, and was working into the 1960's. After then its condition declined, until repairs (including re-roofing) were carried out in 1993. The extensive machinery includes: a 3-pair hurst, water driven via a wooden lineshaft with compass-arm crown wheels (only one complete); 2-pair hurst driven by oil engine which remains; Bobby dresser, sifter, Porteus grinding mill, mixer, cake breaker, two Turner centrifugals, a very old double roller mill and Eureka smutter. The waterwheel, mostly external, is 17ft 8ins diameter.

The mill (Grid Ref TM112527) is a short distance down a narrow lane off the old A45 Ipswich to Needham Market road (turn off at Apex Joinery); you cross the main railway line before the mill is reached. We visit by kind permission of John Onians, nephew of the late E.N. Onians.

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

A reminder of the Suffolk Industrial Archaeology Society meeting at Castle Hill Community Centre, Highfield Road, Ipswich. All S.M.G. members will be welcome to attend.

HERRINGFLEET WINDPUMP OPEN DAY: SUNDAY OCTOBER 12th from 1-4pm

This will be only the second opening of the mill in 2008, so let's hope for a bit more wind than the National Mills Sunday a few months ago. Visitors should park in the Broads Authority car park next to the B1074 and are advised to wear stout and preferably waterproof footwear for the walk down to the mill.

S.M.G. SOCIAL EVENING: SATURDAY DECEMBER 6th from 7.30pm; at THE QUAKER MEETING HOUSE, FONNEREAU ROAD, IPSWICH

Please note the date now, as there won't be a reminder! As usual we will provide drink and some eats (although contributions are welcome), together with some video's, including the Angia TV feature filmed early this year, and hopefully Chris Hullcoop's recent work at Syleham.
