

# *John Silman*

I was very saddened to hear the news that a good friend had died on Friday 19th January; John Silman was a great supporter of SPAB's Committee of Groups and Section (COGS). He attended every meeting I can remember and always had positive and good ideas to take the group forward. He was also always at our annual meetings where he gave an update in the 'Mill Group Reports' on what had been happening in Hampshire mills.

He organized two excellent SPAB Mill Tours in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. These were both 'sold out' due to the good mills that John and his colleagues arranged for us to visit, including on the Isle of Wight the wind turbine factory of Vestas, where John negotiated for us to see the full manufacturing process but with the agreement that no photos were taken!

He was also responsible with others for milling at Longbridge Watermill where I helped on several occasions.

John was presented with a Windmill Certificate in 2006 at the Mills Section's March Meeting for his good work with the 'Heavy Gang' on work to Hampshire Mills. Clearing out turbine pits that had not worked for years was just one of the jobs he tackled.

On a more personal level, I asked John if he knew how I could get a 4 ft 6 in. millstone to my house. This would involve a journey of around a 3 hour round trip. He did not hesitate and said he with the 'Heavy Gang' would love to take this on. So a week later the millstone was rolled onto a trailer and brought to my home, safe and sound and stands by my front door to this day.

Mildred



*John at the Mills Section March Meeting in 2009  
Picture - Mildred Cookson.*

From **William Hill:**

One of the joys of SPAB Meetings for both myself and my father (if memory serves) was John's double act with Dave Plunkett at the end of meetings reporting on Hampshire Mills in that wonderful accent.

More importantly, John and his gang at HMG did such good work to preserve them for future generations. It's a good legacy.