

Three Unusual Warwickshire Windmills

Keith and Ruth Andrews

Tysoe Windmill

At Christmas we chanced to see a random episode of BBC's *Countryfile*, where two people were standing in front of an unusual windmill that we didn't recognise. On investigation it proved to be Tysoe Windmill, situated on an 180m hill near Compton Wynyates between Banbury and Stratford-on-Avon.

It didn't have sails on the television, but when we went to look at it shortly after Christmas they had been replaced, as you see in the rather poor picture. It was very wet and windy (storm Gerritt!) and the steep field was far too muddy and wet to consider climbing the hill to get closer.



The *Our Warwickshire* website gives some details. The mill was built in the early 18th century and is a 12-sided, barrel-shaped sandstone tower with batter. The odd-shaped cap is covered in aluminium shingles, and has a rear projection for winding gear. It is said to contain two stones and all its machinery. The mill operated until 1915 when it was struck by lightning. In 1935 the sails were replaced and further restoration was carried out in 1951. The final restoration in 1968-1975 was paid for by the Marquess of Northampton (of Compton Wynyates).

Chesterton Windmill



This famous feature of the Warwickshire landscape can be seen from several miles away, and from the M40. It stands on a hilltop which overlooks the Roman Fosse Way about five miles south-east of Warwick.

Our 2014 photograph shows that it had sails, but currently they have been removed.

Built in the years 1632-1633, it remained in use until about 1910 when its machinery ceased to work. It was restored from 1965-1971 by Warwickshire County Council in collaboration with the SPAB and the then Ministry of Public Building and Works.

The mill is set on six pillars linked by semi-circular arches. Originally there was a central timber structure within this open space, containing a staircase and storage area. More details are on the *Our Warwickshire* website.

Burton Dassett Windmill and Beacon

Mariana Perry-Zoupanou lent us this postcard, which she recently added to her collection.

We recognised the location of the card, which we had visited: it is now a country park. We had been speculating whether the structure known as 'The Beacon' was the lower part of a tower mill, particularly as the whole hilltop was once an ironstone quarry which would have needed a power source. Mariana's postcard answered the question for us.



Again, the *Our Warwickshire* website gives some details. The post mill was built in 1664. It had an open trestle, four common sails, ladder, tailpole and doorway with hooded porch. It ceased working in about 1912, but was restored in 1933 with public funds by SPAB. On 26 July 1946 it was blown down in a storm.

The website suggests that 'The Beacon' may have been built as a tower mill and later used as a defensive lookout tower in the English Civil War (1642-48).

Burton Dassett is also visible from the M40 if, like Chesterton, you look at just the right moment, to the east of the motorway south of junction 12.

The *Our Warwickshire* website is at ourwarwickshire.org.uk

