

## From the Chattering Damsel at the Editor's Desk

Here we are with another mixed bag of articles and snippets of interest but also obituaries of two of the milling world's colourful characters who have died in the last couple of months; the indefatigable Arthur 'Windmill Man' Smith and the irascible Norfolk Miller, Mike Thurlow, who renovated Letheringsett Watermill near Holt. Their obituaries appear [here](#). Our AGM at the Silk Mill on Friday, 13<sup>th</sup> September will be a golden opportunity to meet the new Manager there, Sue Tapliss, and to learn firsthand how the mill is progressing. We also have the opportunity to tell Andy Fish of good ideas for future HMG group mill trips. I hope to see you all there - and that it doesn't turn out to be an accident prone Friday the 13th!

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**Abbey Mill, Winchester:** Winchester City Council planners have given the go-ahead for a River Cottage restaurant to be opened in Abbey Mill buildings. Pages 49/50 in our book *The Mills and Millers of Hampshire, Volume 1 - Central* spells out the history of the mill and mill house; the last entry notes that it was used as a British Restaurant during the 1940s. There will be quite a contrast no doubt with the new style eatery! See [here](#) for the full press release.

**Alderholt Mill:** some repairs are underway with new timbers being ordered and steel made available.

**Bursledon Windmill:** Many volunteers are being called for to learn traditional milling skills, running workshops and special events as well as giving guided tours. Live nearby and fancy giving some time and add a new string (skill) to your bow at this, Hampshire's only working Windmill? They will be very pleased to hear from you: see their website for details and who to contact plus to see their exciting list of autumn events such as Sun, Sept 8: Wartime Windmill - how Bursledon Windmill helps to defend Britain in WW2 and how it is connected to those aerial icons the Lancaster and Spitfire!

**Crux Easton Wind Engine:** Basingstoke & Deane Council have given some funding towards repainting the tower and sails and repairing the fantail.

**Eling Tide Mill:** Desperately Seeking Stones -Eling Experience Manager, Helen Robinson, needs to source a set of stones to replace Eling's worn out pair. Can you help Helen in her quest? Tell her or Dave Plunkett. Some issues with the sluice gate are still to be dealt with; the problem means that the mill is still not milling but of course welcomes visitors daily.

**Headley Mill:** Dave Plunkett has helped out here by carrying out a report for repairs required to main shaft, the bypass tunnel, and the retaining wall. An inventory is required to record all the machinery and effects.

**Hockley Mill:** Eleanor Yates has passed onto the Mill's owner that repairs will be required to the eel traps (not within HMG sphere) according to nearby residents.

**Longbridge Mill:** Volunteers arrived for the July milling day to find that the main sluice had been broken with stilson wrenches and the gate raised, presumably the evening before, and the mill stream drained, resulting in the boom and sundry plastic bags being stuck in the mud as well as no water for milling. The Stratfield Saye Estate River Keepers arrived to assess the situation and current contact details were exchanged. An air of gloom prevailed but the damage was repaired by the resourceful Andy Fish; by about two o'clock there was just enough water to run the wheel

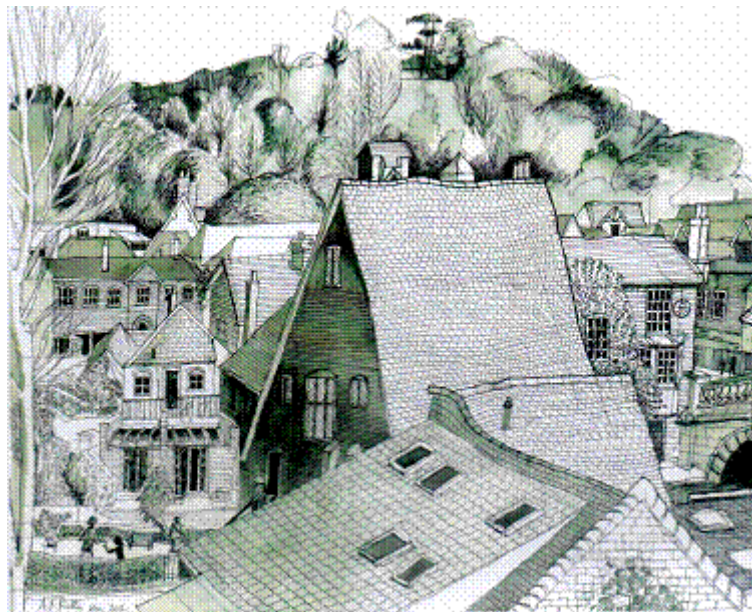
and work the stones - then it was all hands to weigh and bag up flour as visitors were queueing to purchase. Sadly, summer always brings a few problems to Longbridge but we are undaunted.

**Shears Mill:** Celebrations will be held in the first week of September - see [here](#) for details.

## More Hampshire Mills News



Winchester City Mill in 2013  
by Andrew Rutter



## Rooftop view of City Mill by Andrew Rutter

A very surprising discovery was made in June about City Mill in Winchester. A watercolour sketch of the mill painted by J.M.W. Turner in 1795, during the artist's tour of the south coast, was spotted by Ric Weeks, the mill's assistant manager, whilst casually browsing the newly digitised Tate London's online archives. A copy was made for the mill where it is proudly displayed. Not to be outdone Andrew Rutter, a long standing Hampshire Mills Group member and accomplished artist, is well known for his sketches which have appeared in this newsletter over the years; Andrew has dashed off a few of his own pen and ink impressions of City Mill. You can purchase copies of Andrew's work in note card form from the City Mill shop for a very modest sum when you go to see Mr Turner's work.

Hampshire Mills Group member Rupert Nabarro, OBE, has accepted an invitation to become the Chairman of Whitchurch Silk Mill Trust. Owner of Bere Mill, a couple of miles up the road from the Silk Mill, Rupert will be ideal to guide the Trustees through all matters affecting the mill. The current Chairman, Clr. Keith Watts, also announced that Christine Beresford has accepted an invitation to join the Board of Trustees and commented: "We are very fortunate to attract people of this calibre to strengthen the Mill team. I shall step down from the position of Chairman on 19th September but continue as the representative of Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council on the Trust." *My thanks to Pam Moore, Secretary of the HBPT, for sharing this news.*

What is HBPT? It is a registered charity which owns Burseldon Windmill and Whitchurch Silk Mill, among other important sites in the county. The full title is Hampshire Buildings Preservation Trust. For almost 30 years it has operated a revolving fund which allowed it to purchase and restore a number of threatened buildings before putting them back on the market. Find out all about their distinctive role on their website: [www.hampshirebuildings.org.uk](http://www.hampshirebuildings.org.uk); telephone: 023 8027 5153; or write to either their postal address at: Burseldon Brickworks, Coal Park Lane, Swanwick, SO31 7GW. email: [enquiries@hampshirebuildings.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@hampshirebuildings.org.uk).

In the summer newsletter I threw out a challenge to find out who is the oldest, active working miller. Well, since I haven't heard from anybody anywhere, I nominate our own Basil Hunt, at 88 years young, to be the oldest – and our newsletter reaches all England's mill groups plus some parts of Wales and Scotland. Basil has not only worked Longbridge Watermill milling flour since 1997, his carpentry skills down the years have kept the wheel 'afloat', made the hopper and tun cover plus replacement bill handles, cogs and starts.

But do *you* know of someone else who 'fits the bill' as the Oldest Working Miller? *Sheila.*