

## Passing through the mill.....



At the end of September, Wilton Windmill in Wiltshire had a grand finale to their 2012 openings and, as usual, was a hotspot for visitors to this isolated and lofty location above the Kennet and Avon Canal. A smart new custom-built shepherd's hut (*above left*) housing an education room and the ticket office, now keeps the brick tower mill company and makes for a quirky and imaginative link twixt mill and farming land. Displays form an important part of informing the public and the two photographs above show what simple, but effective, results have been achieved inside Wilton Windmill using real items of mill machinery and tools to help in understanding what parts they play in operating and maintaining the mill. There are also boards detailing the history of the area and the mill's place in it plus an entertaining story in cartoon form entitled 'From Farm to Plate' depicting *Seamus O'Grainy* harvesting, threshing, milling, packing, and cooking the wheat. The farmer who owns the surrounding land grows the wheat which is milled at Wilton Windmill and the flour is sold locally in the tearoom of Crofton Beam Engine, the Great Bedwyn baker's and Cobb's Farm Shop near Hungerford. High on its windy hill its Hat's off to The Wilton Windmill Society. The windmill opens to the public March – Sept. See for more details: [www.wiltonwindmill.co.uk](http://www.wiltonwindmill.co.uk).

The Mills Archive Trust was present at the Oxfordshire Family History Fair held at Woodstock on 6th October.

Elizabeth Trout and I were helped by Richard and Michael Mallett who represented the Devon Family History Fair. A link was made between the two organisations as the brothers had researched their family history which revealed a mill owning ancestor in Devon. The Mills Archives' Milling Family Records (with a database donated by Mary and Tony Yoward) proved of

great interest to visitors who remembered their various relatives' connections to mills in Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Northamptonshire and London and related textile industries such as hand-loom weaving plus a Derby silk mill producing material for Cash's of Coventry. Good contacts were made with both the Hampshire Genealogical Society and the Dorset FHS who both showed great interest in the two volumes of *The Mills & Millers of Hampshire*. Altogether a fascinating, albeit a tiring, day well spent in making the Mills Archive more widely known.

One of the autumn events put on by Whitchurch Silk Mill, was the introduction of Japanese silk bookbinding, executed in true traditional Japanese fashion by Debbie Cook. Recently moved to Bishops Sutton, just outside Alresford, Debbie learned the craft of making beautiful notebooks from a master of the art in Japan a couple of years ago. Beautiful, patterned, antique, Kimono silk for the covers is sourced from Japan and Debbie offers a bespoke service to all customers so that the perfect style is created. For more details see her website: [www.paperwithspirit.co.uk](http://www.paperwithspirit.co.uk). Mariana Zoupanos had earlier spent two days there demonstrating her spinning skills.



Mariana spinning: her website is: [www.etsy.com/shop/BoffinBeads](http://www.etsy.com/shop/BoffinBeads).



Debbie Cook tells Peter Mobbs about her silk bound notebooks