

Notes on the Spring Meeting held on 17th March at Ashlett Tide Mill

By Alison Stott



Ashlett Tide Mill and Creek in 1948

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Members arrived from midday onwards and met in the spacious first floor of the mill overlooking Ashlett Creek. A variety of good food and drink was available and we had a sociable time before moving to the upper floor for the meeting at 2 p.m. About 25 members were present, some having travelled long distances to reach Ashlett.

Mick Edgeworth welcomed us all and said that the main task at the moment was the completion of the second mills book. He then handed over to Ashok Vaidya who said that 97 mills have been visited and the information updated; there are only three more to do so that the total number of mills will be about 100, all of them with significant history and information. There are also another 24 where we know something but not a lot – these will appear in the back of the book. The cover has been designed and the maps done and it is just about ready for publication. The first book had 72 mills, so this one is bigger.

Book three – the final one - will cover mills in the north and east part of Hampshire. Volunteers are again needed; John Silman said that local history groups are often a mine of information. Sheila Viner went to the BBC's "*Who do you think you are?*" family history event at Olympia, courtesy of Devon Family History Society. She spoke to members of Hampshire Family History Society on their stand who expressed keen interest in both the new series of our books and in obtaining a list of HMG speakers who would be willing to give presentations to the various

regional groups throughout the county. They acknowledged that John Silman has spoken to a couple of groups, but, there are many more who would enjoy learning about our milling industries.

We will once again be having a stand at the Water Festival which is on 14th and 15th July at Staunton Park and again in the marquee. Volunteers to man the stand will be needed.

Dave Plunkett said that the exhibition “Tide Mills of Western Europe” is in the U.K. this year, at Totton Civic Centre and then at House Mill in London. He would like some help from members.

Dave Plunkett then gave a very interesting talk on local mills; first, he introduced Tim Woodcock who lives at Ashlett Mill and is a photographer for the Beaulieu Estate. Tim is researching local history and said that the mill at Ashlett was first mentioned in 1816, having four pairs of stones milling grain from Fareham and Portsmouth which was brought up the creek. It has contained no machinery since 1910. Dave then went on to give his illustrated talk – over a number of years he has gathered information and taken photographs of a number of mills and/or sites in this area.

Very many thanks to Dave for organising this very interesting and enjoyable meeting.