

John Silman's Presidential Notes

The last couple of months of 2011 was a mixed bag of good and not very good events, kicking off with a trip to Hockley Mill on the 7th November with Andy Fish to obtain a price for treating the woodworm. We may be able to apply for a grant again as this is a different matter to the wheel repairs which were partly funded by an S.P.A.B. Mills Section grant.

The following day saw me on my home ground speaking to the "Happy Bunch" about the history of postcards.

Out with Andy again on the 15th, plus Mick Edgeworth, as we attended the Newcomen Society lecture held at the Portland Building, University of Portsmouth, given by Malcolm Llewellyn-Jones, entitled "Technical Insight into the Battle of the Atlantic". This was a jolly good talk, typical of the [Newcomen Society for the History of Engineering and Technology](http://www.newcomen.com) which I can recommend to you. For a list of all their talks, past and present, have a look at their website: www.newcomen.com.

To Bursledon Windmill on the 21st to seek ideas of what work is needed to be done on the mill. Bad news followed 3 days later: there is considerable rot in the windshaft.

Longbridge Mill claimed me 2 days later for milling but found me assisting with fitting one replacement start to the waterwheel. As usual the real work was done by Basil and Fred.

On December 5th I went with several HMG members to look at what was possibly a mill site on the Itchen Navigation. Looked very doubtful..... very muddy and I fell partially in the mud!

Attended the delightful HMG Winter General Meeting at Lower Neatham Mill with a social party to follow. Many, many thanks to Trevor and Janet Weston to allow us practically free rein to look at the mill – and the food was superb.

I particularly then enjoyed the Longbridge Milling Team's Annual Dinner the following evening. Held at the Beech Arms, Oakley, we had an excellent meal.

22nd December 2011- off to Dartmouth to spend Christmas with the family. Very pleasant.

Poor start to 2012 as on January 5th, one of our chimneys was blown down in a violent storm, taking the television aerial with it. Andy and Fred took bricks and tiles to the dump. Many thanks, lads, for making the roof safe. *You don't miss central heating until you haven't got it!*

This was followed at the end of the month with seven more starts dropping out of the wheel at Longbridge Mill. We are unable to mill until Mitchells & Butler agree to finance repairs.

Looked at New Forest mills with Andy to update our information for the forthcoming volume of our HMG mills history series of books.