

TIMS 2011 Symposium. Pre-Tour: Bornholm – Mill Paradise

At 2pm on Tuesday, 30th August, 2011, fifty two people from eleven countries, climbed onto a coach outside terminal 2, Copenhagen Airport and set off for the beautiful Danish island of Bornholm. Seven of those people were members of the Hampshire Mills Group. The tour was brilliantly put together by a lovely lady called Lise Anderson, aided by a very small band of helpers.

The countries represented were: Denmark, United Kingdom, Netherlands, United States of America, Germany, France, Japan, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Australia and Estonia. Fortunately for me, the universal language for TIMS (The International Molinological Society) is English.



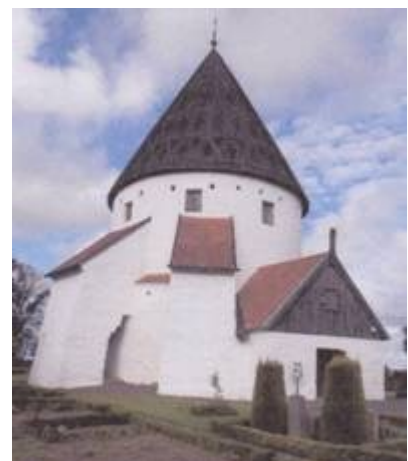
From Copenhagen, we crossed into Sweden, from where we boarded a ferry to the Island of Bornholm. Within minutes, we had reached our hotel, just in time for dinner. The landscape on Bornholm is very different to that of mainland Denmark. Bornholm, in places, is hilly and craggy while the mainland is much flatter and wherever we went, we were never very far from water, sea, rivers and inlets.

It is one of the prettiest landscapes I have ever seen. Over the three days, we visited many windmills, post mills, and beautiful Water Mills (my favourite type of mill). All the mills had been, or were in the process of being restored, to a greater or lesser degree. Some looked a little sad. Some looked as if they were built last year. Some were in full working order. Some had very little equipment left. While others had been converted and would never again be used for their original function. Many of the mills still retained their accompanying buildings: Millers houses, bakeries, barns etc.. To describe every mill we visited, in detail, would fill the whole newsletter, so instead, I will try to give you a snapshot of the sheer beauty and magnificence of these stunning buildings.



On average, we spent an hour at every mill with lots of photo stops as well and, being a small island, we were

never very far from the next mill. On the first day, we crossed the centre of Bornholm from west to east and travelled to all points north, visiting three Dutch type windmills, two post mills and a watermill. We also stopped at the most wonderful round church at Olsker and the ruins of a very large castle at Hammershus. It only rained twice while we were on



Bornholm, and one of those times coincided with our arrival at Svaneke Post Mill (Bechs Mølle).

Question: How many molinologists can you squeeze under the shelter of a post mill? Answer: A lot!!!

We had lunch at Gudhejm Mølle. Built in 1893, it is located in the centre of the town and, whilst looking magnificent from the outside, it's not what you would expect inside. No stones. No machinery. But a shop, offices and a very nice restaurant.

Tejn Post Mill, built around 1800, is still in use and was moved to the outdoor, Agricultural Museum, Melstedgård in 2006. This was a fascinating stop. The museum is set around a cobbled courtyard and consists of the farm house, barns and stables. It really gives the visitor a glimpse of how life was lived, two centuries ago. In the evening, we dined at Nordbornholm's Røgeri, a lovely (mainly) seafood restaurant set on the shores of the Baltic. Fish features heavily on most menus in Bornholm, which suited me very well.



On the second day, we travelled round the southern half of Bornholm where we visited to three windmills, a post mill and another beautiful water mill. Again, we had more photo opportunities. After stopping at Kirkmøllen, the oldest preserved stone mill on Bornholm, we moved on to Slusegårds Vandmølle, built at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Although no longer in use, it is still functional. The mill pond has been dammed and is connected to both a trout house and the mill. It was set in the most lovely of landscapes. Jantzens Fristelser, Nexø was our lunch time stop today. (Fristelser is Danish for Temptation) It is just 100 metres from the town but set right on the edge of the old harbour. Nexø is Bornholm's largest fishing port and diners at the restaurant can sit outside and enjoy the view while they eat, watching the small fishing boats manoeuvring in and out of the harbour. The whole atmosphere was a delight.

We moved on to Egeby Mølle, a post mill built in 1787 and then Aarsdale Mølle, an octagonal Dutch type windmill built in 1877. Our last stop of the day was at Saxebro Mølle and Bakery which was built in 1870. It is believed to be the best originally preserved complex on Bornholm. The Mill, bakery and millers residence are all in tact. Saxebro is known as the "Queens Baker" because it supplied layer cakes for royal weddings. Bread continued to be made in stone ovens in the bakery until it closed down in 1986. Since the death of the mill owner in 2006, the mill complex has deteriorated. It is in a bad state but has been protected from further decay. It is hoped that Saxebro Mølle and the bakery will be restored as a working museum. But, as always, the problem is financing the project. Back to our hotel for an evening meal and we must not be too late to bed. We have an early start tomorrow.

On the third day, after rising at The crack of dawn, we again boarded a ferry over to Skåne (Skania) the southernmost province of Sweden, visiting three more mills on our way to Göteborg. First stop was Övraby Kvarn, a smock mill built in 1887. It milled continuously, using

wind power until 1974. It was the last mill in Sweden to use wind power for commercial activity. Next, on to Kronetorps Kvarn, a 24m high smock mill built (in 1841) on the site of three burial mounds. Superstitious islanders said that it was bad luck to build there and complained of terrible noises in the mill, caused by supernatural beings.

Our last mill, after three wonderful days, was Kulla Gunnarstorp Kvarn. Built in 1789, it is the oldest windmill in Skåne, to be preserved outside a museum. A truly magnificent mill as I am sure you will agree.

We stayed in Göteborg for the night before, once again, rising at the crack of dawn, to board a ferry to Frederikshavn in the north of Denmark. We were heading for Aalborg, where the symposium was to take place. In Aalborg we were joined by a further forty nine members from an additional nine countries: Austria, Belgium, Spain, Greece, Ukraine, Russia, Rumania, Cyprus and Portugal. What a truly International Society this is. To my shame and relief, everyone spoke (and understood) English. I was able to communicate with everybody. Wherever we went, we were wined and dined so well, often consuming traditional food, and wines & beers from the regions we visited. We had a wonderful time.

Now, I am looking forward with enthusiasm to the next TIMS symposium in 2015, when we will be visiting Rumania.

Ros Plunkett

