

## Presidential Notes by John Silman

**28<sup>th</sup> April** Spoke on the History of Milling to the Fawley & Holbury U3A resulting in a donation to our funds.

### MAY

**6<sup>th</sup>** I was very sad to learn of the death of our member, Anne Finnigan today; she had been ill for sometime. Anne is indeed a sad loss to the group but happy memories of her at Pilcot Mill where she joyfully hosted meetings of the HMG.

On a more mundane note, Basil advised me that a large number of wedges had come out of the waterwheel at Longbridge Mill.

**9<sup>th</sup>** Milling at Longbridge for National Mills Weekend was cancelled due to the loose wedges problem. Mitchells & Butlers had been informed and a visit from the millwright required to assess and carry out the repairs so that milling could be resumed at the end of the month.

**10<sup>th</sup>** Hockley Mill open for National Mills Weekend. Crew present was yours truly and Eleanor who is so helpful on these occasions with publicity etc.

**15<sup>th</sup>** Anne Finnigan's funeral at All Saints' Church, Dogmersfield. Previous commitments prevented Margaret and I from attending.

**16<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>ND</sup>** A week on the canals. We did the Stourport Ring e.g. Worcester to Birmingham; then to Wolverhampton and Stourport where we entered the mighty River Severn which took us back to Worcester. 120 locks altogether, 58 of which were done on the first day in pouring rain and with all the locks "against" us!! Nevertheless, a very enjoyable week.

**26<sup>th</sup>** Another meeting with Alan Brown of Eastleigh Borough Council's Engineers' Department to learn of more progress with the turbines at Bishopstoke.

**31<sup>st</sup>** Tony and I attended our member John Lovell's Open Day at his fascinating Lords Farm, Sheet, near Petersfield. We talked to many people about milling and one or two were able to tell us of family connections with various old Hampshire mills. A nice surprise to see Gavin Cook there; a keen HMG member, Gavin was a regular with the Longbridge milling team until family commitments uprooted him to a bit further away. Thank you John for another splendid day at Lords Farm.

### JUNE

**4<sup>th</sup>** Spoke to the Headley Society on the History of Milling which was well received.

**9<sup>th</sup>** Spoke to the Liphook U3A and their Local History Group on the History of Milling.

**11<sup>th</sup>** I gave the History of Milling talk to the "Striking Back Club" in Southampton. This organisation exists to give as much help as possible to the victims of stroke and do a wonderful job.

### JULY

**1<sup>st</sup>.** On a purely personal note, Margaret and I went to Bath for our younger daughter's graduation ceremony in Bath Abbey. She had worked extremely hard and we were delighted to see her

*being awarded a 1<sup>st</sup> Class Honours Degree; she's now a fully fledged Social Worker in Bath and North East Somerset. Well done, Rachel!*

**7<sup>th</sup>.** *HMG members, John and Janet Hammond, brought along members of Southampton North Probus Club to Longbridge Mill, to see the machinery in motion. I had arranged for Basil and Fred to run the wheel and Basil brought along slides of the mill before and after the fire of 1991. The Probus Club kindly arranged a question and answer session over lunch and all three of us were kept busy imparting information. John and Janet, thanks for bringing along so many people interested in the mill. Thanks very much.*

**14<sup>th</sup>** *Alison (Stott) and I spent a good chunk of the morning at Whitchurch Silk Mill, cutting weed in the river to assist the flow downstream. Much of the cut weed was drawn by the current onto the sluice, raising the level of water we were working in! I was fortunately wearing chest waders but Alison was in thigh high boots and consequently went home in a wet and uncomfortable condition. Nevertheless, we got rid of much weed. Thank you Alison.*

**16<sup>th</sup>** *Another talk on the History of Milling, this time to the Yateley Society, on a very dark and wet night in Yateley; this caused me some problems as after leaving the hall, I could not find the road leading to the M3. Eventually I discovered the correct way and started south, being overtaken by what felt like hundreds of speeding drivers at speeds I could only vaguely remember from my working days!*

**18<sup>th</sup>** *Milling at Longbridge. A very good but long productive day, as we milled extra flour for sale at the forthcoming Water Festival, although I was saddened to hear from Pam Moore of the death of our member, Paul de Groote (see obituary elsewhere).*

**26<sup>th</sup>** *Margaret and I attended the Hampshire Water Festival and very good it was too. Held in the gardens of Leigh Park House near Havant, Margaret was especially interested because when I first knew her she was Captains' Secretary at the Admiralty Underwater Countermeasures and Weapons Establishment in Leigh Park House. We walked all around the lake as well as looking at all other stands. Meanwhile, the HMG staffing the stand were kept very busy; the sales of flour outstripped everyone's expectations and Basil Hunt had to be summoned to meet Mick Edgeworth half way up the county at Dummer to supply us with another consignment of flour and satisfy the demands of the festival goers! It was a very good weekend and will be held at the same venue in 2010. I look forward to this. Many thanks to all members involved in the arrangements for this excellent show.*