

Hampshire Mills Group Newsletter



No. 67 Winter 2004

*We Wish you a Merry Christmas and a
Happy, Healthy and Peaceful New Year*

Chairman

John Silman
16 Verona Road
Chandlers Ford
SO53.2BZ
☎ 02380 254117

Vice-Chairman

Mick Edgeworth
17 Cerne Close
North Baddesley
SO52.9GX
☎ 02380 732967

Secretary

Alison Stott
Bridge Cottage,
Exton, Southampton
SO32 3LT
☎ 01489 877293

Treasurer

Eleanor Yates
Danesacre
Worthy Road
Winchester
SO23 7AD
☎ 01962 852594

Project Manager

John Christmas
☎ mob. 07778 136727

Membership Secretary

Lyn Peet
Faithfulls
Crux Easton
Nr. Newbury
RG20 9QF
☎ 01635 253044

Archivist

Tony Yoward
4 Slipper Mill, Emsworth
PO10 8XD
☎ 01243 378452

Newsletter Editor

Ros Plunkett
20 Kevins Grove
Fleet, Hampshire
GU51 3LJ
☎ 01252 815037
Email ros@millbowl.co.uk

SPAB Mills Section

Sec. Simon Hudson
37 Spital Square
London. E1 6DY
☎ 0207 4560909

Monday to Friday
9.30 to 5.00

Section bookshop open
Thursday 10 till 4



186 733 405 - Neatham Mill, Neatham, Alton, GU34 4NP

HMG Dates for your Diary

Friday 17th December 2004 - Christmas Party & Meeting - Neatham Mill at the kind invitation of Trevor & Janet Weston. The meeting will again take the form of an American Supper. Please bring along food and/or drink for all to share. (There are directions on the back page of this newsletter. A map was included with the minutes of the last meeting)

Friday 18th March 2005 - H.M.G. Spring Meeting and AGM. Venue TBA

Saturday 21st May 2005 - SPAB trip to Isle of Wight

Friday 17th June 2005 - H.M.G. Summer Meeting. Venue TBA

Thursday 1st September - Sunday 4th September 2005 - SPAB Belgium Tour

Friday 16th September 2005 - H.M.G. Autumn Meeting. Venue TBA

Friday 16th December 2005 - H.M.G. Christmas Meeting. Venue TBA

We are always looking for venues for our quarterly meetings. If you have (or know of) a mill that you would like to share with the members of HMG for any of the above meetings, please let our Chairman know.

For Your Information Only

The Hampshire Mills Group Committee meet four times a year, approximately one month before each of the members meetings. In 2005 these meetings are all on Thursdays. They are: 17th February, 19th May, 18th August and 17th November. If there are specific items that you wish the committee to consider, prior to the next members meeting, please advise the Chairman or Secretary in advance.

The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Hampshire Mills Group.
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Editor's Comments

Following on from the rather brief Newsletter in the Autumn, I have received so much material this time that you are treated to a bumper edition and I will still have to carry some of the items over to the Spring edition.

My thanks to all those who have sent me items, articles and pictures.... Please keep them coming.

I must however say a very special "thank you" to three people in particular: Tony and Mary Yoward, who send me anything and everything that they feel would interest you, the reader and, John Silman who, having recovered from his recent illness, is really back on track with the Chairman's Diary.

Since my last Newsletter, I have been to Portugal with TIMS and attended my first SPAB (Mill Section) meeting. The Portugal experience was amazing and, much to my surprise, for a "rookie" molinologist, I even found the SPAB meeting interesting!! There are articles about both events in this edition.

For the TIMS Symposium, David presented a paper entitled "Searching for the Origins of the Tide Mill". It was very well received and he was immediately invited to return to Portugal in January 2005 to attend "Tide mills in Western Europe: valorisation of the cultural and natural heritage as a development resource" supported by the Culture 2000 Program of the European Commission. The House Mill, Bromley by Bow is also being represented.

David will be going alone, as his flights and accommodation are being paid for by the Commission and I can't justify a second trip to Portugal so soon. Ah well, perhaps I'll get some more unpacking done!!

A. J. Bozworth

We bid farewell to AJB (from Gloucestershire) who died a few months ago. A Hampshire Mills Group member since the very early days, he was little known to most of us as he seldom came to meetings

He loved mills, their history and reading about their renovation and restoration; in fact he was one of those people who form the core of enthusiastic groups such as ours. He always looked forward to receiving our Newsletter and our sympathy goes to his widow and family.

Message from the Membership Secretary

MEMBERSHIP CARDS At a recent committee meeting the question regarding the necessity of annual membership cards was raised. A quick survey of a number of members revealed that very few used them for whatever and wherever discounts were offered. The rising cost of postage has also been a factor in our decision to cease their issue - and is also the reason why reminders are not now sent at the beginning of the year, instead a "Pay Now" notice is prominently printed in the newsletter.

Therefore the proposal for 2005 is -

- * anyone paying by cheque, through the post, will receive an acknowledgement with the next issued Newsletter (you can confirm the receipt and banking of your cheque by looking at your bank statement).
- * for payment by cash (or cheque at meetings) a personal acknowledgement will be given on HMG note head.

If anyone has any strong views about this, please let me know but in the meantime it is hoped that this move will save both money and time.

PS. I might also point out that when I joined in 1992 there were no membership cards; these began in 2000.

Lyn Peet

The Queen: One is Green

The Queen is going green. She is to build a £900,000 hydro electric plant on the River Thames to power Windsor Castle as part of plans to turn the Royal Household into a model of efficiency.

Outline permission has been granted and the local council is now considering giving final approval for the plan. Once the plant is in operation, it will mean a significant amount of electricity will be generated for the 900 year old castle without burning fossil fuels. The project follows other environmentally friendly moves such as conversion of the royal cars to liquefied petroleum gas and energy saving light bulbs for Buckingham Palace.

The new hydro-electric plant will consist of turbines with 19" steel blades driven by water cascading down an existing weir. It will be the first scheme of its kind in South East England. Buckingham Palace said "The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh are very environmentally conscious.

Environmental groups hope that the plant will become a model for similar Thames schemes.

From The Sunday Times - 31st October 2004 - Article supplied by Angela Smith

Chairman's Diary

Monday 30th August: Received a phone call from Anne Frome. She and her husband Andrew have purchased Island Mill in Kingsclere and they would like at least to get the wheel turning again. I promised to visit them and have a look at the mill and, in particular, the wheel

Sunday 12th September: With John Lovell, I attended a show at the village of Heyshott in West Sussex. John had brought along his scale model of the mighty Dock Mill Windmill which stood in Southsea and reached 120 feet to the top of the finial on the cap. He had also brought an American model of a typical wind engine from a U.S. manufacturer. Both these models are electrically powered although the wind was probably strong enough to have powered them naturally!! A most interesting show with various reaper/binders and early combine harvesters cutting wheat and a couple of traction engines driving threshing drums. There was even a ram baler producing bales of tightly packed straw bales. I thought these had been banned from demonstrating at shows but perhaps I'm wrong. It certainly brought back memories of my young life at Woodcott, especially the horse drawn equipment - that's giving away my age. Altogether, an interesting day. Thanks John!

Thursday 16th September: With Tony Yoward to Wickham for a meeting of the interested parties in Chesapeake Mill. Representatives were present from the County Council, the museums aspect, the ship timbers aspect, the Parish Council, the lessees, H.M.G., the U.S. & Canadian navies and the Friends of Chesapeake Mill. The conclusion of the meeting was that a working party should endeavour to form a trust in order to apply for grants and that all parties should be kept informed of progress. Our first working party at the mill will be on Sunday 3rd October when a work rota will be agreed and work will commence.

Monday 20th September: I was delighted to be invited by Anne and Andrew Frome, the owners of Island Mill at Kingsclere, to look at the mill and their problem with silted up water courses. We looked at this delightful country watermill from top to bottom and I found it surprisingly complete and with a lot of interesting artefacts left over from its active milling life including two pairs of stones (1 peak and 1 buhr) and an internal waterwheel of cast iron. The head and tail races are both heavily overgrown and in need of dredging and clearing back. The buckets of the wheel look as though they all need replacing. I gave them some advice which I hope will prove helpful and invited them to join H.M.G. which they have done. We welcome them to our midst. We hope next year to organise a party of members to carry out a survey on the complete building and its watercourses and perhaps do some clearing of the headrace.

Friday 24th September: The quarterly meeting of H.M.G. took place at Crux Easton Wind Engine by kind permission of Lyn and Carol. A fine evening with just a little Zephyr of a breeze which enabled members attending to see the sails turning against the background of a nearly full moon. I hope some of the photographs taken come out well enough to reproduce.

The meeting went well apart from the Chairman's usual waffle and Carol & Lyn kindly provided tea, coffee & biscuits. Many thanks to them both. The minutes of the meeting will be distributed when the Hon. Sec. returns from Italy so I shall not enlarge on them in this column

Sunday 3rd October: I had hoped that several members of the "Heavy Gang" would turn up at Chesapeake Mill in Wickham for the first work party. I need not have worried as, amazingly, there were thirteen members of the joint H.M.G./H.I.A.S. volunteer workers present. I believe that this is a record and I hope to see even more at the other working parties.

The first job we had was the jammed Armfield Turbine. Your Chairman was elected to put his Wellington boots on and descend into the turbine casing and Jim Knights said "There's something stuck in the top of the turbine." The 'something' turned out to be about ten to twelve feet of plastic sheeting, the sort used to shrink wrap pallets of bricks. We managed, with the use of large stilsons to turn the shaft slowly and gently pull the plastic out the way it went in! The turbine gate was then wound fully open and away she went.

We then turned our hands to inspecting all the milling equipment left in the mill and deciding the best way to tackle what is a lot of work. Meanwhile, Ruth & Eleanor and Angela & Nigel were recording all the items left in the mill by means of photography, drawing and measuring. For the record, the following members came and worked on the day: Nigel & Angela Smith, Ruth Andrews, Eleanor Yates, Jim Knights, Ashok Vaidya, John Christmas, Carol O'Shaughnessy, Tony & Mary Yoward, John Silman, Andy Fish and John Hone. My grateful thanks to everyone for giving up their Sunday lie-in.

Tuesday 12th October: I was delighted to read an article in the Southern Daily Echo to the effect that Bishopstoke Parish Council is to try to re-instate the two Armfield Turbines that are all that is left of Shears Mill on the corner of Riverside in the village. I rang Mr Storeys number to offer our help but he was out. (see articles on page 7)

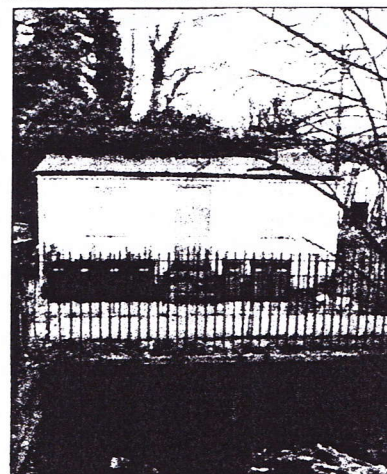
Chairman's Diary continued

Wednesday 13th October: Phone call from Mr Storey (Clerk to Bishopstoke Parish Council) regarding the turbines at Shears Mill site. He advised me that a meeting of invited, interested parties would be held shortly and that we would be invited to attend. This with a view to returning the 30" and the 36" turbines to working order.

The output shafts of these two turbines could be dog clutched together to drive all the roller milling machinery in the mill. These were (we think) installed at the mill in 1926 or 27 and yet the mill was demolished around 1928 and, in fact, it does not look as if the turbines have done much work at all.

Members will recall that we co-operated with Eastleigh Borough Council on a previous bid for Heritage Lottery funding which was unsuccessful. Let's hope Bishopstoke has more luck. Watch this space for further news!

Picture from the Southern Daily Echo, Wednesday 13th October 2004



SECOND RESCUE ATTEMPT: The hut in which the turbines are stored.

Monday 18th October: Lecture on History of Milling to the Rogate Society who kindly gave me a donation to our funds.

Sunday 24th October: With Mick Edgeworth, John Christmas and Tony Yoward to Hayling Island to collect items from Quay Mill, Emsworth that had been stored in a cart shed at North Hayling. These will be stored until we can restore them for use in mills in the County. They include: oat crushers, cereal cutters and even what looks like a tugs tow rope about 20 fathoms long!

Monday 1st & Tuesday 2nd November: I went to the Isle of Wight to continue sorting out the visits for the one day tour for the S.P.A.B. Mills section next May.

Monday 8th November: Lecture on History of Milling to Fareham & District Model Engineers at Segensworth. Another donation to the funds.

Tuesday 9th November: Lecture to National Trust members at "Uppark" on The History of Milling. Very well received with many questions afterwards and several requests for details of H.M.G. and how to join. Very good lunch provided and I've been promised the recipe for the delicious raspberry sweet course!!

Wednesday 10th November: Very wide ranging committee meeting for H.M.G. held by kind invitation of Keith & Ruth Andrews at their home in Winchester

Friday 12th November: S.P.A.B. (Mill Section) Committee Meeting at Spital Square

Saturday 13th November: S.P.A.B. (Mill Section) Autumn Meeting held at the Royal College of Surgeons of England at their Headquarters in Lincoln's Inn Fields. The topic for the day was the works of modern Millwrights and I, for one, found it a fascinating and instructive day. One of the best meetings for a long time.

Sunday 14th November: First of all to Hayling Island where seven of us helped John Christmas to load more of the equipment out of Quay Mill, Emsworth, onto his trailer. We then went to Slipper Mill, Emsworth, where Tony and especially Mary Yoward provided us with a delicious lunch before we started on the job of finishing the work to the tidal sluice for Slipper Mill. The work party, consisting of; John Christmas, Mick Edgeworth, Andy Fish, John Hone, Nigel & Angela Smith, Nigel Sturt, Tony Yoward, Ruth Andrews and myself and even including Tony Parkes of the A.I.A. (who happened to be visiting Tony & Mary) spent about four hours (well into darkness) renewing the solid rubber strip on the bottom of the gate and fitting a new wear strip on one side of the sluice frame. This always takes longer than you think and involves dismantling and remantling the entire control mechanism and building & striking a scaffolding tower used to control the sluice gate during operations.

See separate report and pictures by Nigel Smith on page 9 - Ros



Quay Mill - before its conversion into a clubhouse for the Sailing Club

Chairman's Diary continued

Sunday 15th November: Mick Edgeworth and I assisted John Christmas in unloading his trailer of the items collected at Hayling Island yesterday.

I feel that I had better stop this narrative at this point and wish all members a very happy Christmas and a good New Year. I hope to see many members at our American Supper on Friday 17th December at Lower Mill Neatham, Holybourne (near Alton). Your agenda will have a map on how to get to the mill. It's a delightful house, with delightful hosts and our year end meetings are always a very social occasion" Hope to see you there.

Our Chairman clearly forgot that he had decided to stop reporting on 15th November because, a few days later, another envelope dropped through my letter box. The Chairman's report continues: Ros

Tuesday 16th November: Spoke to the members of the Bishopstoke Society on the History of the British Canal System. I also took the opportunity to see how they felt about the Parish Council's idea of restoring the Armfield Turbines (one of 30" and one of 36") still left on the site of Shears Mill. They were very enthusiastic about the prospect. I also collected another cheque for H.M.G.'s fund. Watch this space!

Saturday 20th November: I attended the official opening of Chesapeake Mill in it's new guise as a showroom for antiques and collectibles. I must say, the old mill looks quite glamorous in its new role. Business was pretty brisk for a first day and I'm sure the "bubbly" helped as well. Fitters were still working on the power system, driven by the Armfield Turbine buried under the mill floor. I talked to lots of people during the day and I was particularly pleased to see Sylvia Tappenden and her friend, Lucy, who came in to see the changes in the mill. I hope we may see some more members recruited as a result of information given during the day. My thanks to Anthony Taylor (the lessee) for his hospitality while I was there.

Sunday 21st November: The latest batch of milling wheat delivered to Longbridge Mill has proved to be rather hard and difficult to mill so, as milling is next Saturday (27th November) we contacted Gavin Bowie at Bursledon Windmill and, through his good offices, we were able to use his conditioning equipment to get some moisture back into the grain!

Consequently, Sunday morning saw Basil Hunt and your unworthy Chairmen at Longbridge mill, taking the hopper, horse and shoe off the working pair of stones and carefully filling four sacks, each containing 25kilos (55lbs?) with grain from the main storage bin. We lowered them carefully down the miller's ladder (bear in mind that we are both pensioners) and carried them out to my car. With three sacks in the boot and one on the back seat, we drove to Bursledon Windmill and were welcomed by Gavin and his staff.

Conditioning then took place. I'd better explain that this consists of tipping the bags of grain (one at a time) into a beautifully clean, electrically driven, small concrete mixer! (never used for concrete) and mixed with a fixed amount of water for ten minutes. Having achieved our objective (and scrounged a cup of tea), we stopped off at Chandlers Ford for soup, bread & cheese before going back to Sherfield-on-Loddon to return the grain to the mill. It will be interesting to see if this makes the grain easier to mill and, if so, by how much.

I don't know how Basil felt after our little exercise, but I certainly slept soundly. Next time, I hope we can get some volunteers to help or we can beg, borrow or steal a new, unused cement mixer!!

Tuesday 23rd November: As well as being a member of H.M.G., I also belong to the Wessex Mills Group and they are organising a series of visits for their members to interesting mills in their area. Via their newsletter, I received an invitation to visit the John Boyd Horsehair Factory at Higher Flax Mills at Castle Carey. I duly reported at 2pm for a tour of the works. For any Industrial Archeologist worth his salt, the works are a little gold mine.

To start with, the looms have no flying shuttle. Instead, an articulated arm reaches across the piece of work and picks up one (that's just ONE) horsehair and draws it into the work. These looms date from 1870 (when children were banned from holding the hair) and were designed and manufactured in the County of Somerset. The horsehair now used is almost all from Mongolia and is supplied only in specific lengths and colours. The dying process takes place 'in-house' and that's another story! I won't say more because I'm hoping to arrange a visit in the New Year but it will have to be on a week day. So, if you would like to come, let me know.

Wednesday 24th November: Further phone call from Sue Beckett of Poole Museum ref; the wallower she has to dispose of. Asked for dimensions e.g.diameter and thickness. I've promised to collect it from her a.s.a.p. Obviously, another job for the "Heavy Gang".

John Silman - Chairman

The Heavy Gang

The last few months have been moderately busy with ongoing involvement at Eling Tide Mill, Crux Easton Wind Engine, Whitchurch Silk Mill, Chesapeake Mill, Wickham, and Timsbury Waterwheel & Pump.

Eling Tide Mill; has a problem with various hatches & sluices which, having been replaced some years ago, are now in need of replacement again. Some emergency repairs have been put in hand by the section to enable the wheel control to be effective. This consisted mainly of screwing ply timber to both sides of the gate to seal off the large gaps which had formed between the gate timbers.

A clean up operation was also undertaken, at the request of the Trustees, during the period whilst the Mill Manager was not available.

Whitchurch Silk Mill; have had to replace the timbers in the wheel and the wheel support timbers. During this process, the calcine deposits on the wheel were removed. Members of the section attended the mill during this process and assisted.

Crux Easton Wind Engine; has had minor work carried out, mainly to the control linkages. Shafting and pulleys have been obtained for this location but have yet to be installed.

Chesapeake Mill, Wickham; has seen the section start work on some of the machinery left in place. All of the machines will shortly be complete in their drives with fast and loose pulleys which will enable the turbine to run without the machines running, but with the shafting all belted and rotating behind guarding, where necessary.

It is intended to use the turbine to generate electricity and we have attended the mill to help and advise the contractor doing the work.

Timsbury Wheel & Pump; has been the major ongoing work this year. The wheel has been decalcined and painted, the pumps have been stripped and a new crank sourced, complete with new coupling. These items have been repainted and are in place and aligned. Prior to this placement, the bearing timbers were replaced. These have been fashioned from 12 x 12 air seasoned oak. The wheel bearings have yet to be fully aligned after which the starts and paddles can be sized and fabricated. The wheel control sluice and frame is being rebuilt and should be fitted shortly.

Some mill machinery; from Quay Mill Emsworth, removed some 20 years ago and put into store on Hayling Island is being removed into store for future use at other locations. This is being done to prevent the machinery being fed to the scrap merchants and lost for future deployment

John Christmas - Project Manager

Hampshire Mills in Brief

Pan Mill - Isle of Wight

Green Future Assured with Mill Site Preservation Cash - *Southern Daily Star*, 25th November 2004

A Mill on the Isle of Wight will be preserved for future generations thanks to a lottery grant. Island Trust 2000 has been awarded a £44,000 grant to save Pan Mill and make it more accessible to the public. The Trust will now buy the 125 year lease on the land, which was recognised as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC). The green oasis, in the heart of Newport, has become an important habitat for wildlife including badgers, owls and bats.

Ian Boyd, of the Island 2000 Trust, said "We are very grateful to the Heritage Lottery Fund for supporting this project. Buying this land will allow us to preserve a historic site and a valuable natural resource that has played an important role in Newport's history, making it accessible to local people and visitors alike."

In its time, Pan Mill was the highest production grain mill on the Island and grain was shipped to the mainland for sale. The land around the mill has never been developed and so it has become an important habitat for wildlife.

Some of the money will be spent to restore public access and improving links to footpaths as well as cycle networks.

Article supplied by Mr G. J. Harrison-Watts

Hampshire Mills in Brief

Bishopstoke Mill

Fresh Hope for Salvation for Unique Turbines - *the Southern Daily Echo, Wednesday 13th October 2004*

A project to restore a pair of unique turbines which once powered a Bishopstoke Mill is set to be resurrected four years after a similar bid fell by the wayside. The Armfield Turbines - believed to be the only ones of their type still surviving in the UK - are housed in a dilapidated corrugated iron building above the River Itchen on the corner of Riverside and Bishopstoke Road.

Plans to display the restored machinery in a new building at the Shears Road site, owned by Eastleigh Council, floundered when a bid for cash from the heritage Lottery fund failed. Bishopstoke Parish Council has stepped forward in a bid to spearhead a fresh effort to get the old and historically valuable turbines back in working order. Members want to put them on display in a more appropriate building which would allow people to see both the machinery and the river beneath.

The village authority said there had been a mill in Bishopstoke since 1086 and the River Itchen remained a central feature of the Bishopstoke conservation area. The turbines, which were manufactured in Ringwood, ceased working when the old mill was demolished in the 1960s*. Parish Clerk, Peter Storey said: "Such is the interest from those who were involved previously, plus newcomers to the area and the Council, that the Parish Council has decided to pick up the stick and run with it again."

Article supplied by John Silman

Mill Turbines Preservation Plan - *Hampshire Chronicle, Friday 15th October 2004*

Bishopstoke had a water mill for more than 900 years - and the Parish Council wants to preserve its memory. Since the old Shears Mill was demolished back in the 1960s*, its turbines have been housed in an ugly corrugated iron building on the corner of Riverside and Fair Oak Road. But the Riverside area, with its stretch of the picturesque Itchen, is the heart of Bishopstoke Conservation Area and villagers have long wanted something better to commemorate the mill.

Plans were drawn up in 2000 but they foundered through lack of cash. A spokesman said this week there had been sustained interest in the project and now they want to bring it to a successful conclusion. First record of Bishopstoke Mill was in the Domesday Book in 1086.

The turbines from the most recent building are a linked pair of Armfield turbines manufactured in Ringwood. The hope is that the restoration project will replace the unsightly building with a structure that will allow visitors to see the turbines and the river underneath. Now councillors are set to meet the Bishopstoke Society and other interested parties to draw up an action plan. They want help and advice from other people as well and they are asking anyone who thinks they can help, either practically or financially to contact the Parish Clerk, Peter Storey, on 01794 389220 or email: bishopstoke.pc@btconnect.com

Article supplied by Tony Yoward

** both articles state that the mill was demolished in the 1960s, but our Chairman is convinced that Shears Mill was actually demolished in 1928 - Ros*

Chesapeake Mill, Wickham

Water wheel's return makes a splash as visitors take a peak at museum *The Portsmouth News, 24th November 2004*

The sluice gates have been opened at a historic mill for the first time in 13 years, thanks to a £100,000 renovation scheme. The Chesapeake Mill in Wickham, closed its doors as a working mill in 1991. But the water wheel was turning again as it greeted visitors on its opening weekend as a museum and a furniture and antiques outlet.

Company bosses are now hoping the water wheel will provide a source of green energy for the mill. Mill Manager, Susan O'Malley said, "We're working on getting the turbines going to generate electricity for the whole building.

Import and export company, Taylor Haines bought the Grade II listed building from Hampshire County Council in October 2003 despite objections from local historians who wanted to turn it into an American Maritime Museum. The mill is partly made of 18th century pine timber from the USS Chesapeake - an American frigate captured in 1813 and brought back to Portsmouth.

Barrie Marson, of Wickham History Society, said: "Everybody in the village has been very impressed by what they've done in maintaining the historic character of the building."

Hampshire Mills in Brief

Whitchurch Silk Mill

Friends of Whitchurch Silk Mill - Annual General Meeting on the evening of 20th October 2004.

A well laid out Agenda provided the usual formal headings to wade through. You will be glad to know that finances are sound, membership is large for such a body with 217 paid up members. The volunteer scheme works well with people tending to garden, cobwebs and water wheel. It's usually a good sign when the Committee Members get voted back in 'en-block'.

There was a wonderful prize draw with six principal prizes of which the first was a giant 'teddy' almost five foot high and nearly as wide. The chairman had good control and humour enough to keep the meeting moving nicely along.

There was a presentation by 'Silk Moves' The interaction of movement, space, materials, encompassing furnishings in silk as art, lighting and mobiles. They have a National Art award and grant with new proposals for 2005.

The Silk Mill Manager, Stephen Bryers gave an in depth overview of Mill production, silk orders and future development. In fact it was a very full and interesting account of which I will extract a few items of particular note.

Marketing and presentation of the Mill in the past year has involved features by BBC on South Today and Radio South, a feature in SW Trains magazine and regular news and features in local and regional news papers.

There is a Stannah stair lift in the course of installation with the aid of substantial sponsorship. This will provide the disabled with access to the first floor. A new shop counter has been designed and produced at a local college. In the past year, over 1000 school children have visited the Mill and there are parties booked for most weeks of the year.

Innovation is supported by developing a silk wall hanging in Winchester Cathedral and silk furnishings with a marble furniture manufacturer. They aim to play a part in the Anniversary of the Battle of Trafalgar in 2005. Also starting an aural history project of the Mill and town in 2005.

And last but not least the completion of the water wheel restoration which the HMG have had such an extended role in over the past years.

David Plunkett

Pilcot Mill

There is a fine little village water mill in North East Hampshire which has been loved and cherished for many years by Anne and Geoff Finnigan. Sadly, Geoff passed away a while ago and since then, Anne has been determined to continue to maintain the timber framed, family home and its detached mill

Long standing HMG members will remember a summer meeting at Dogmersfield when the house and mill were open to us and we were handsomely fed and watered. Time has passed and the Mill is still in good hands and weatherproof, but fast growing trees close by have been brushing against the roof and slowly causing damage to the roof tiles. As the Rivers Authority have historically undertaken the control of unruly river bank trees, Anne made a request for them to be lopped to clear the Mill structure. This took so long to action that damage to the roof worsened considerably before the trees were finally dealt with a few months ago.

I have kept in touch with Anne over many years and once I was made aware of the problem, obtained her permission to assist in repairing the current damage. There is a building company in Whitchurch not far from a certain Silk Mill, well known for their house restoration and conservation work in North Hampshire. It was also involved in the restoration of Longbridge Mill. Yes he could help and would arrange for his roofing contractor to visit and decide with Anne on roof repairs. Big pause and silence for weeks!

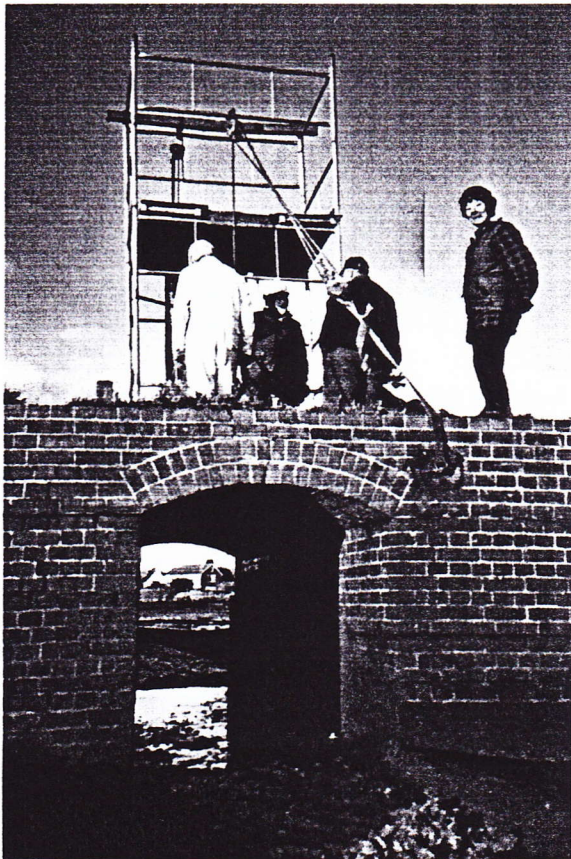
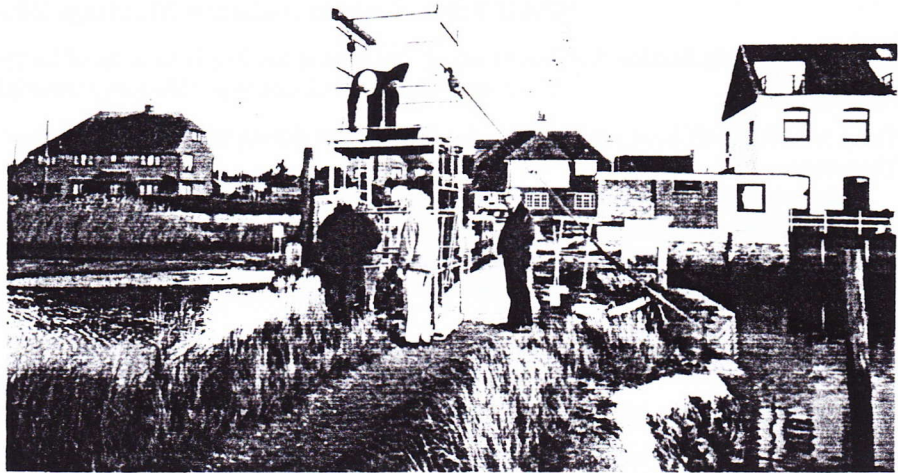
Then the roofer arrived one afternoon to inspect the damage and prepare an estimate. Another big delay. I contacted the Whitchurch Office and was assured that an estimate would be going to Anne. Long pause..... Still no estimate, and still waiting for repairs to be started before Christmas. Will Pilcot Mill get its roof repaired? Watch this space or, better still, phone me please, with the name of a competent, reliable roof tiler.

David Plunkett

Your News & Letters

HMG Working Party on 14th November 2004

Sunday 14th November dawned bright and sunny, but very cold, which suited our purposes for the day's activities. A well attended group met at the pre-arranged location on Hayling Island to be led by our chairman to the site where our morning's efforts were to be clearing mill machinery for safe storage at Chilcomb. The artefacts have been stored in a three sided barn for over 10 years and originally came from Quay Mill after it was converted into a sailing club and marina in Emsworth. Equipment includes a crusher, sack hoist and what may be a bread mixing machine plus other ancillary machinery. Plans for their long term future have yet to be decided, but they will be in safe storage with Hampshire County Museums until a use is found. Two heavy items were winched onto the trailer and other parts moved out for easy collection at a later date. The group then adjourned for lunch courtesy of the Yowards at Slipper Mill where our next task awaited.



After an excellent lunch we constructed temporary scaffolding next to the sluice at the Slipper Mill pond whilst the tide dropped. The objective was to complete earlier repairs to the sluice gates done over a year ago and specifically to fix a thick rubber strip onto the bottom of the gate and add some plastic strips to the side bearers to reduce leakage. The gate was raised to its full height by a pulley block and cleaned of marine life before the rubber strip was fixed in place – this required the gate mechanism to be dismantled which was a time consuming job. All the while, walkers on the public footpath were asking us what we were doing.

Due to the short daylight, the job had to be completed under floodlights and torches, but it was all finished by 6.30pm. Hopefully, a job well done and good for at least 20 years or so. Many thanks to Tony and Mary for their hospitality and the eleven HMG members who braved the chilly conditions.

HMG is still undertaking working parties at Timsbury and Chesapeake Mill in Wickham, volunteers always welcome, please contact the chairman for more details.

Nigel Smith

Your News & Letters

The Windsave Mini-Turbine

Extract from Money Week, Issue 206, 19th November 2004, page 34

“May seem ridiculous but it will produce 15% of your annual electricity supply when fixed to your roof” says The Observer. Once professionally installed, the system will start working in winds of only 5mph, “bringing green energy to the masses.”

Price: £995 Contact: 0141 353 6841. www.windsave.com

David's comment: All windmill enthusiasts dream Christmas present.

David Plunkett

SPAB Mills Section Autumn Meeting, 2004

The SPAB Mills Section Autumn Meeting was held at the Royal College of Surgeons, London, on Saturday 13th November 2004. The theme was “Modern Millwrights”.

There were five half hour presentations by Millwrights during the day on work they had carried out recently They were:

Ian Pritchett (IJP) - Chillenden, Stelling Minnis and Cranbrook Windmills in Kent

Martin Watts - Town Mill (Watermill) Lyme Regis in Dorset

Geoff Wallis, (Dorothea) with Anthony Hole - Moulton Windmill, Lincolnshire

Malcolm Cooper - Lower Somerford Watermill Gloucestershire, Pontrhydydyff Watermill, Wales & Pitt Mill, Somerset

Vincent Pargeter - Polkeys Drainage Mill, Reedham Marshes, Norfolk,

This was followed by a Millwrights panel: Questions from the floor and then Members Contributions

Naill Roberts made an appeal for a stone crane for Wimbledon Windmill. They already have a block and tackle to lift heavy sacks and the crane would be complementary to this for demonstrating mechanical principles to school children.

John Silman of Hampshire Mills Group announced the forthcoming day tour of the Isle of Wight and the weekend tour of Belgium. Early estimates suggest the costs are likely to be about £40 for the Isle of Wight and £335 for Belgium. A Trust is being set up to look after Chesapeake Mill and its future is rather better than expected. Some machinery remains and the turbine is running again. A number of items of machinery from Quay Mill at Emsworth have been offered and it is hoped that these can be kept in a store as a resource and made available for future restorations.

Dave Gregory reported on progress at Chesterton Windmill in Cambridgeshire. The cap has been repaired together with the gallery.

Luke Bonwick had news of repairs at Wray Common Mill in Reigate. The mill has a conical cap but earlier photographs show an ogee shape. The cap has been removed and it is likely that the replacement cap will replicate the cap worn at the time the mill was listed.

John Capps reported rapid wear of a gear in the transmission from the fan at Stone Cross Windmill and drew attention to the fact that several special grades of ductile cast irons are available. John presented a series of slides showing the steps in casting a lever for a Patent sail and suggested that closer cooperation between millwrights and iron foundries could bring benefits to both.

Peter Philby reported on research into “Millwrights Past and Present” undertaken recently within the Mills Research Group. He had uncovered much interesting material on millwrights in the Fens and he found that in many cases the blacksmiths had evolved into millwrights and engineers. An estimate for a drainage mill was of particular interest.

Dave Pearce paid tribute to amateur millwrights and the contribution made by volunteers in rescuing and restoring mills. Their services are particularly valuable when there are insufficient funds to pay professionals and he cited several successful projects including Wicken Fen Windmill, now fully restored by amateurs. He noted that large projects are tending to become more and more expensive as more time is devoted to planning and preliminary work and funding is tending to be concentrated on fewer and fewer projects.

Excerpts from a much more full report by - Jeff Hawksley

Your News & Letters

Right Now - I'm struggling to keep up with what is happening in my life: Three years ago, I lived on my own. I was reasonably happy. I had a good job as P.A. to the Management Team of Mars Electronics International (MEI - a sister company of Mars Confectionary). I had my own little bungalow, my children, my grand children..... Life was simple and uncomplicated

Then I met and married David, Senior Clerk of Works at Windsor Castle. I wore my "flash hat" to Garden Parties at Buckingham Palace, my "posh frock" to the Christmas Ball at Buckingham Palace, hosted by Her Majesty The Queen and Prince Philip, with various children and grandchildren in attendance. I went to barbeques at Kensington Palace, parties in Windsor Castle, once again rubbing shoulders with the Queen, and I was given privileged vantage points for the "Garter Knights" ceremonies. Much of that came to an end

when David retired, although we still have the odd invitation, which is nice.

What have I got now? To my amazement, I am still dining in Palaces, this time, the Palace of the Marquis de Pombal in Oeiras, Portugal, as a guest of the City Council.

Let me explain. For twelve days. Starting at the end of September, I accompanied David to Portugal and then on to Galicia, Spain, as part of a multi national group called TIMS (the International Molinological Society) on the occasion of their 11th Symposium. I met nearly a hundred "Mills Nuts" from around the world, two of whom have generously allowed me to



The village Goat Herder
in Vilarinho Seco

share with you the reports they produced for the TIMS and SPAB newsletters (pages 11 to 14) My thanks to Peter Hill and Jeff

Hawksley, who with their wives Joan and Mavis, befriended me. I went to Portugal knowing no-one and left there with new found friends and many happy memories.



A villager working his way through a huge
field of grass, with nothing but a scythe



Village women at the community wash house

Do you know, having paid for our return flights, I don't think we spent another euro the entire time we were there. We were treated like royalty wherever we went. We were entertained by Mayors, Governors of Provinces and Councillors and we had banquets every lunchtime and every evening. I have never seen anything like it. The tables were groaning under the weight of the most unbelievable spreads. It was truly amazing. And then there were the mills..... Wonderful mills - Water Mills, Wind Mills, Tide Mills of every shape, size and condition. Some were working, some derelict, many restored or in the process of being restored. We met wonderful people - millers, villagers, farm workers. Many of them were so very poor but they were all so very friendly and all seemed completely content with their lives.

I hope you will forgive my enthusiasm. I could have "wittered" on for several more pages. That's how good it was. All the photographs on both this page and pages 12, 13 & 14 were taken by yours truly, and I have hundreds more stored on my computer. If anyone wishes to know more, I will happily talk to them for an hour or ten!!

Ros Plunkett

11th Symposium of TIMS Portugal - 25th Sept to 2nd Oct 2004

Membership of TIMS has many advantages and benefits and, unquestionably, attending a major Symposium proves this beyond doubt. Held in Portugal from 25th September to 2nd October 2004, the 11th Symposium was truly a molinologists delight. The first three days were centred around the Lisbon area where in the Recreios da Amadora we were able to listen to and learn from a wide variety of conference papers interspersed with visits to some of the local mills. After this we headed north visiting mills en route and making an overnight stop at Penacova.

Continuing our journey, more mills were visited as we passed through the very attractive countryside with hilltops 'littered' with modern wind turbines, to reach our final destination of Boticas in the Barroso Mountains. Here, over the remaining two days the final papers were given in the Auditorio Municipal and further intriguing visits paid including one to a remote village in the heart of the mountains. Mills, the likes of which many of the 100 plus delegates from 13 countries had not seen before, were scrutinised and photographed. The carefully researched papers, many of which were given by U.K. delegates, covered a wide range of molinological subjects including, "The Windmills of Alexandria", "The Power & Efficiency of Waterwheels in Theory and Practice", "The Mills Archive International Implications", "The Mills of Olymbus: Karpathos", "The Box Mill (Japanese Rice-Stamp Mill)", "The Windmills on the Estonian mainlands" and "Searching for the Origins of the Tide Mill". Other papers dealt more specifically with the mills we saw but without exception, all were most informative and much was learnt from them.

To attempt to describe each of the windmills, watermills and tide mills seen in a report of this length is impractical. However, I have picked out those considered to be of most interest to the reader. Whilst in the area of Lisbon, at Alfragide, Moita, Cruz, and Laureana we saw fine examples of the conventional Portuguese two-storey squat tower mills with a conical cap complete with a dormer to weather the wind shaft. Unlike our own mills these have six triangular jib sails and fixed at regular intervals along the ropes between the spars are clay buzios or 'whistling pots' which give an audible warning of the wind speed. If the speed of the sails exceeds 30km per hour the low tone becomes higher in pitch warning the miller that he must reef the sails. Internally the design of all these mills follows the same pattern. The cap sits on rollers, which run on a stone curb and winding is effected by means of a winch mounted on the inner face of the curb. The olive wood teeth in the brake wheel mesh with a wooden lantern pinion stone nut to turn the quant transmitting power to a single pair of *limestone millstones. ("Brake wheel is in fact a misnomer as there is no brake in Portuguese windmills. The sails are stopped by quartering i.e. they are turned to 90 degrees of the wind direction). The stones are partially enclosed in a wooden vat the front quarter of which is replaced by a linen curtain which directs the newly ground meal straight into a meal bin alongside. There is no damsel but attached at right angles to the shoe is a wooden staff, which runs over the upper surface of the stone agitating the grain into the eye. A screw on the stone floor links the tentering directly by a metal rod to the bridgetree on the floor below.

Variations on this lay-out were seen in other mills. For instance, at Esteval, where there was an intermediate half floor, and at one of the two mills at Bordinheira, where there were two pairs of stones, those for grinding wheat on the upper floor and a pair for grinding maize on the lower floor, driven by a lantern pinion quant off a spur wheel mounted on the stone-spindle from the stones above. The other mill at this site, although looking externally the same as the previous ones was operated commercially using four pairs of stones, underdriven from a great spur wheel. Here the power used was both wind and electrical.

As we progressed northwards we saw the remarkable sight of fourteen windmills on the hilltop at Gavinhos. All were of the Portuguese design and varied in their state of repair. One was being restored, whilst another was actually working with two pairs of stones driven in the same manner as described above. All fourteen were turned to wind by a tail pole from beneath the cap.

Undoubtedly the most fascinating of all the windmills visited was the triangular wooden mill perched high on a hill at Jeneanes. Referred to as a moinho giratorio, we would classify it as a 'paltrok' mill. The body of the mill is triangular in ground plan section, and is pivoted beneath the front on a short wooden stump fixed at the centre of a circular stone track. The rear of the mill is supported on two large stone wheels (which look to all intents and purposes like two old millstones on edge), one mounted at each corner. The jib sails are mounted on a wooden windshaft which emerges from the front of the triangular body. To wind the mill, the stone wheels are moved using a crow bar under one of them, easing the whole body around the crude stone winding track. Internally a single pair of stones is driven directly off the windshaft by a lantern pinion quant. The design of this mill is most unusual and has to be seen to be fully appreciated.

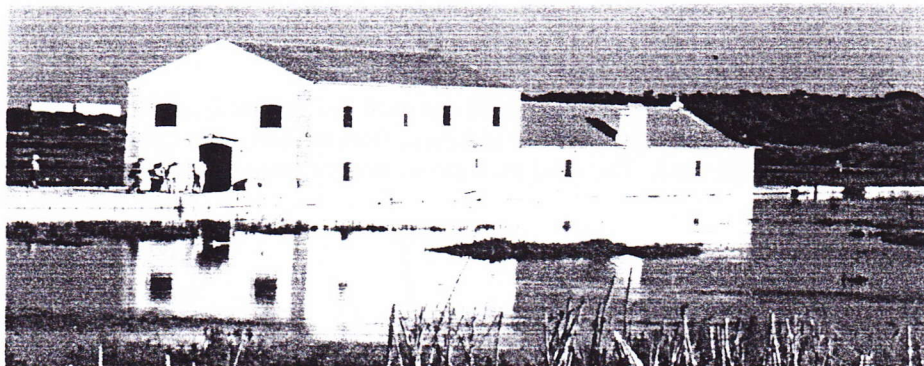
** David Plunkett believes that most of these millstones were, in fact, granite. - Ros*

11th Symposium of TIMS Portugal - 25th Sept to 2nd Oct 2004

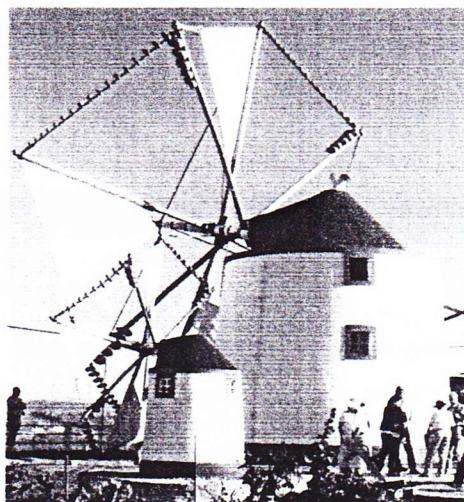
Two tide mills were visited, both in the Lisbon area. The first at Cais das Faluas, which ceased working in 1970 and is currently undergoing a full restoration programme as a heritage site with the building to be completed in January 2005 and the machinery installed later in the year. Detailed sectional plans were available for us to see exactly how the mill operated using six horizontal wheels.

At Corroios we were able to see the present tide mill built on a site that has been used for this purpose for 600 years. Fully restored it is now a heritage museum which can be operated for demonstration purposes. It was originally built to drive 3 pairs of stones however over a period of time the building was extended and now houses 8 pairs. Water from the incoming tide is collected and retained in the millpond at the rear of the mill and once the tide has ebbed, leaving the horizontal water wheels above water level, the pond water is discharged through spouts onto the wheels. A spur wheel below the stone hursting operates two pairs of stones per one horizontal water wheel. The original wooden wheels have been replaced by iron ones.

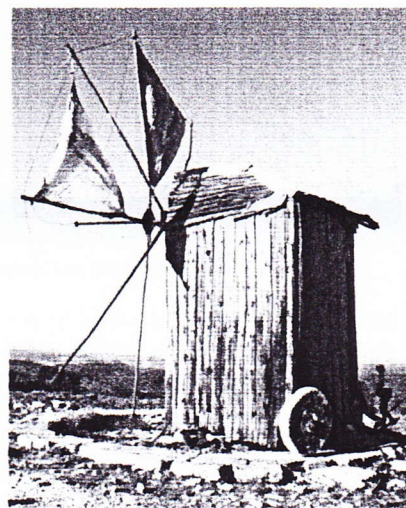
Peter Hill - West Sussex



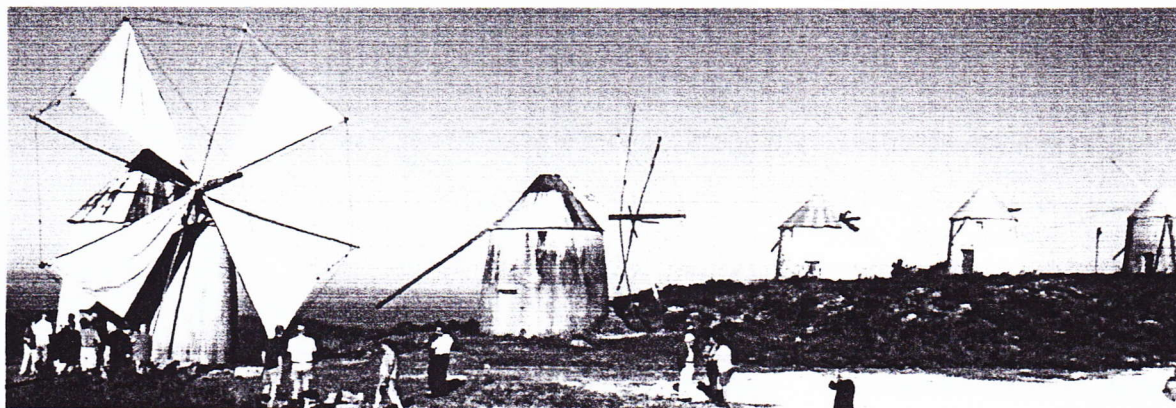
600 year old Corroios Tide Mill (Seixal)



Windmills of Bordinheira (Torres Vedras)



Wooden Triangular Post-Mill at Jeneanes (Condeixa)



Some of the Fourteen Windmills on the hilltop at Gavinhos

The TIMS Post-Symposium Tour of Galicia - 2nd to 6th October 2004

On the morning of Saturday, 2nd October 2004, after the closure of the TIMS 2004 Symposium, two buses set off from Boticas in Northern Portugal. One went south to Lisbon and home. The other, with a group of 30 people aboard, headed north for the Post-Symposium Tour in Galicia. What followed was five days of landscapes, seascapes, good hotels, wonderful food, excellent company and immaculate organisation. This region, in the North-West corner of Spain, is an enchanted place with magical rocks which ensure success in love, and witches with the power to cure all kinds of coughs and respiratory ailments. And there are mills, in incredible numbers and of incredible variety.

Two sets of windmills were included and each had special features. Three tower mills grouped on a hilltop in Catoira were clearly experimental and dated from the early 20th Century. There is no provision to turn the sails to face into the wind. The wind shaft passes straight through and projects from the tower at both ends. Wooden



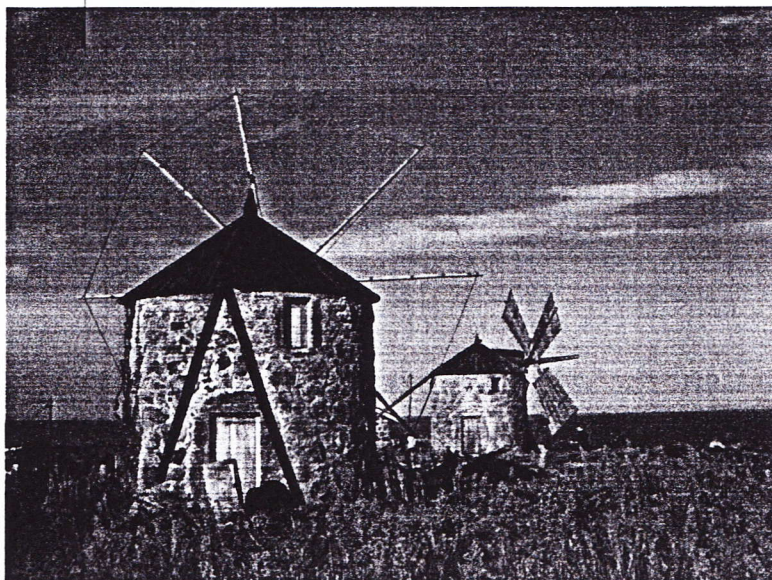
A Tower Mill at Catoira

board sails can be fitted at either end and their pitch adjusted to suit the prevailing wind from the north or from the south. For light winds, sails can be fitted at both ends to give added power. By contrast, the two windmills at Montedor, just over the border into Portugal, appear to be more conventional. But one, the Moinho do Cima, has sails made up from a framework of laths into which thin sawn wooden boards are fitted when the mill is to be set to work. The other windmill on the site, the Moinho do Petisco, is a regular tower mill with cloth sails.

Two tide-mills were included. Both mills were of the Regolfo type where the horizontal waterwheels are enclosed in cylindrical stone chambers. Water is admitted through a tangential slot which imparts a swirl to the water

and this spins the waterwheel to drive the millstones. Both mills had important duties in their day to provision the ships setting out on voyages of discovery and, later, carrying emigrants to the new Spanish colonies.

And, of course, watermills, the speciality of the area. Counting bus destinations gives no clue to the number of watermills as whole valleys are available to be explored. Footpaths lead from one mill to the next, water is everywhere with channels, gates, controls and spillways making for magnificent landscapes. Almost every type of horizontal mill can be found and although the waterwheels appear to be exclusively of the open type there are many examples in both wood and iron. Water supply arrangements include the inclined open chute and other arrangements where nozzles are pressure fed from vertical drop-towers (Arubahs) or enclosed, inclined pressure ducts. One mill at Baroxa, with three waterwheels, had three different water delivery systems, one of each type. This mill is one of 16 and the Baroxa valley is a delight of rocks, rushing water and mills.



Foreground - Moinho do Petisco Background - Moinho do Cima Montedor

The TIMS Post-Symposium Tour of Galicia - 2nd to 6th October 2004

Similar, though on an even grander scale, are the twin valleys of the Rivers Picon and Folon. There are no less than 36 mills along the Picon and another 25 along the Folon, all within a couple of hours walking. Most were built in the 17th and 18th Centuries and they worked until the 1960s. Access is by footpath only and, in the days when these mills were working, transport must have been a problem. Deep ruts worn into the rocky outcrops along the path testify to the countless numbers of carts which must have laboured up and down the valleys. On the Tuesday, when these two Edens of watermills were visited, it rained – the only rain of the entire tour. But this did mean that water was available and the lowest mill of the Picon-Folon group was working for our visit. The miller was a charming man who had owned this mill for most of his life.



Watermills in the Valley of the River Picon

These wonderful projects are typical of several projects currently underway in Spain and Portugal to preserve and re-vitalise the traditions, heritage and wildlife of the countryside. They are managed by the local authorities with the cooperation of private owners and, as mills were important in their heyday as social centres and meeting points, so now they are now valued as focal points to connect other features of the area. By creating these natural parks, with well laid-out networks of footpaths, sympathetic tourism is being encouraged and life is being brought back to these wild and beautiful areas.

Jeff. Hawksley



Watermills in the Baroxa Valley - what looks like dry rock face in the foreground has a sheet of water constantly tumbling over it

Unless You Know Better !!!

And now for a bit of fun:

My thanks to Ruth Andrews who loaned me this photograph, taken (I believe) while she was on holiday in Latvia. She reckons that it's got to be the ugliest mill she has ever seen. What do you think? Do you agree or do you know better?

If you have a mill picture that you think can compete with this one in the "beauty stakes", please send it to me (I will return it, once I have scanned it) I will publish all contributions in the 2005 Newsletters, and we'll let the members decide

The winner of the "Ugly Mill" competition will be decided on a show of hands at the Christmas 2005 meeting and will receive a rather nice bottle of wine from the "David Plunkett Cellar" (He's a bit of a connoisseur you know. He certainly knows his red from his white!!) Of course, if no-one sends in any pictures, the winner will be Ruth. So come on, have a rummage in your drawers and see what you can find!!!



Directions to Neatham Mill

From Winchester, go up the A31 past Alton on the dual carriageway and turn left at the roundabout. It is marked Alton & Bordon (B3004)

Turn right after a few hundred yards and go through Holybourne. The village straggles on for about a mile, then the road goes under the dual carriageway, under the railway and over a narrow bridge. Immediately turn right to Neatham. Follow the narrow road, which goes uphill and past a few houses. Then be sure to bear right, downhill.

Neatham Mill is at the bottom of the hill, right in front of you.