

Hampshire Mills Group Newsletter



No. 64 Spring 2004

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Monday to Friday
9.30 to 5.00

Section bookshop open
Thursday 10 till 4



Would you buy a
bag of flour from
any one of these
three suspicious
looking
characters??

Story on pages 10 & 11

As if you didn't know:
LtoR - Mick Edgeworth,
Basil Hunt & John Silman

Photograph - courtesy of
the Basingstoke Gazette

HMG Dates for your Diary

Thursday 1st January 2004

Membership Fees were Due - If you haven't paid yet....

You're LATE. Please help our Membership Secretary and save HMG the expense of posting out reminders by paying immediately.

Single membership £8. + £1 for joint membership (at same address)

Out of County - Single membership £5.50. + £1 for joint membership (at same address) Corporate Membership - £15.

Friday 26th March 2004

Spring Meeting - Durley Mill, Durley, Southampton. (map page 12)

Saturday 8th / Sunday 9th May

National Mills Weekend - Look out for more information about events around the County

Sunday 13th June 2004

Solent Energy Fair - Bursledon Brickworks More information in the next edition

Friday 18th June 2004

Summer Meeting - Eling Tide Mill, Totton (tbc). More information in the next edition

Fourth Saturday in every month

Milling at Longbridge Mill. Enjoy a day out. You could even have a drink or lunch in the restaurant

Forthcoming Events - details still to be finalised

Spring 2004 - Possible visit to Lower Mill, Longparish

Mid August 2004 - Water Fair - Winchester

September 2004 - History Fair - Eastleigh

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

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Editor's Comments

- Once again, our Chairman has provided this Newsletter with a wonderful diary of events and really makes the reader aware of just how much work is going on in this county to save and preserve our heritage. It is fair to say that his diary is so comprehensive that it is unnecessary (at this time) to include an additional "Heavy Gang Report". It may re-surface one day in a future publication, should the Chairman's pen run out of ink.
- At the present time, the summer meeting is still scheduled to be held at Eling Tide Mill on Friday 18th June. There is currently a little uncertainty regarding this venue. You will be kept informed and will have up to date information in the next Newsletter



Eling Tide Mill

Hampshire Mills Group News

Hartley Wort

John Silman

Sadly, I have to report the passing of one of our most distinguished members. Hartley George Wort died on the 23rd February 2004 in his 92nd year. Hartley was the last manager of Armfields of Ringwood, a most important company in the annals of mill engineering.

Educated at Queen Elizabeth Grammar School, Wimborne Minster, Hartley had a lifelong interest in the properties of water power and was "pitchforked" into a managerial position in the company at an early age. He not only managed parts of the company, but also acted as a salesman for them and he and his wife Sheila travelled all over Britain meeting millers and managers on the company's behalf. In his time away from work, he was a life long Christian, worshipping at Stuckton Chapel all his life, as did his parents and grandparents before him.

A musical man and a very keen gardener, Hartley was a man in the best tradition of the millwrights of this country, managing an important organisation in the fabric of milling.

Our thoughts and sympathies go out to his wife, Sheila, and members of the family.

I propose to do some more research and, with the help of Sheila, have a much more detailed look at Hartley's life and work in a future Newsletter

Len Ball

It is with sadness that I record the death of Len Ball on 2nd December at the age of 70, after a short, severe illness. Len had been a member of the Suffolk Mills Group since 1979. Born in Isleworth, Middlesex in 1933 and brought up in Hayes. Following an apprenticeship in Mechanical Engineering, he married Sylvia and after two years National Service with the RAF, he returned to "Civvy Street" and moved to Basingstoke working at Lansing Bagnall as an engineering draughtsman. Here, he became interested in steam traction engines and crewed for a friend who owned an engine. Sylvia remembers him with their young son and daughters arriving home blackened and grimy after a days stoking. His passion for traction engines stayed with him throughout his life. Whilst living in Basingstoke, another of his lasting passions was born. Wind and Watermills. He nurtured this by joining the Hampshire Mills Group. He was also a member of the Mills Research Group and SPAB and regularly attended the annual meetings of the Mills Section

Taken from the Suffolk Mills Group Newsletter - Roy Berry

The Hampshire Mills Group would like to offer our sympathy to Len's family.

Chairman's Diary

21st & 28th November 2003 - Have spent these two days at Whitchurch Silk Mill assisting the Mills new engineer, Derek in work on the restoration of the waterwheel. The wheel has been stripped to its component parts and we are cleaning the lime encrustation off the metal parts of the wheel. As far as we know, this has not been done before, since the wheel was new. Despite using the heavy gang's compressors and needle guns, this is hard and heavy work. We could do with some help (no previous experience necessary as full training is given.) The wheel is being stripped to bare metal and it will be finished in a pleasing shade of maroon, so we will need painters as well. If you can help, ring Mick on 02380 732967.

27th November - To Rowlands Castle Historical Society with Tony to give them "So you think you know about Industrial Archaeology. It's a very light hearted quiz about Industrial Archaeology with objects to identify and slides of processes to name. A jokey way to put the message across but which soon has the older participants saying "I remember when" and in this way, we often get information on mills etc., that is completely new to us. So it's really a two way exchange of information. We enjoy it as much as any of the persons present. What is more important is the cheque, made out to Hampshire Mills Group, received at the end of the meeting.

29th November - Received a box of recipes from J. Salmon of Sevenoaks for sale to members at the Christmas meeting.

1st December - To the Church of St Martin in the Wood at Chandlers Ford to talk to their Ladies Guild about the "History of Water & Windmills". This of course resulting in another H.M.G. cheque.

4th December - I was delighted, to be invited to Basingstoke, by the Basingstoke & Deane District Council, to witness the presentation of their "Awards for Excellence". The highlight was the top award for "Excellence of Craftsmanship" to Crux Easton Wind Engine and it's restorers. Lyn and Carol received the award on behalf of the Trust and Lyn made an excellent speech of thanks, naming people from both the contractors and John Churchman as our project manager, who had made particular contributions to the successful completion of the work. I was also delighted to see that Bere Mill belonging to one of our members, Rupert Nabarro, won the award for the best conversion. Integrating the original barn with the main house, without spoiling its shape or compromising its interior.

I was extremely sorry to hear from our good friends, Roy & Penny Berry (of Essex Mills Group) that former H.M.G. member Len Ball had died quite suddenly. Older members will remember Len, who became a member of H.M.G. very early in the organisation's independent life. I have written to Len's wife Sylvia offering our condolences.

5th December - With Mick and John Reynolds to Gosport. To be specific, to Priddys Hard and the new "Explosions" museum for the Annual General Meeting of the Hampshire Buildings Preservation Trust (H.B.P.T.). A very interesting meeting, very ably run by the Chairman of the Trust, Bill Fergie. Details were given of many preservation & restoration projects, including Crux Easton Wind Engine. I cannot resist quoting from the written report viz "This successful project illustrates the benefit of working in partnership with funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Borough Council and Hampshire County Council. Above all, the project owes its success to the dedication and determination of the volunteers of the Hampshire Mills Group. The restoration of the Wind Engine is a significant achievement for the group".

There was also some detail of work carried out to make Chesapeake Mill water & weather tight and details of who was now to lease the mill (I have since contacted the County Councils Estates department and they have confirmed that we shall be invited to the next meeting to determine details of how the interior of the mill will be treated). I was able to advise the AGM of our concerns about Chesapeake Mill.

H.B.P.T. is easing itself away from direct rule by Hampshire County Council and is standing more on its own two feet. We were given details of what is to happen at Priddys Hard and we were then taken on a tour of parts of the site. There is much to be done before the public can be let in.

6th December - Received today the 'Newsletter No 4' of the Holgate Windmill Preservation Society, York. Readers of my previous scribbles will know that Margaret and I were invited to their last AGM, when I addressed them on the History of Milling. Subsequently, we are now exchanging newsletters. Their No 4 carries the wonderful news that, following a detailed survey by Millwrights, Thompsons of Alford, the viability of complete restoration is confirmed! Up to date information can be obtained at www.holgatewindmill.org or, if in York, contact Brian Lambert on 01904 799295. We wish them very well indeed.

Chairman's Diary contd..

12th December - We had what I thought to be a delightful meeting at Whitchurch Silk Mill, kindly invited by Stephen Bryer and his staff and with their active participation. I have not seen so many of our members present at a meeting before and we were delighted to see new members James & Laura Barron, the new owners of Longparish Upper Mill and Ashok & Jane Vaidya from Donnington Mill.



Rupert Dawnay receiving the plaque from Mildred Cookson

Tony Yoward, who has guided our finances with great care and meticulous attention to detail announced his intention to retire as Treasurer. On behalf of all our members, I thanked him very much for building our resources from a small sum to our now substantial accounts. Thanks Tony for all your hard work!! We have succeeded in persuading Eleanor Yates to take over the finances and we welcome her to the committee. Thanks Eleanor in anticipation!!

The highlight of the evening was the presentation of a plaque to Rupert Dawnay for the work he has carried out, almost single-handedly, to restore Longparish Upper Mill to working order, with a little help on the very complicated bits by our member millwright, Ian Clarke.

The presentation was carried out in fine style by HMG member Mildred Cookson who is, of course Chairman of SPAB Mills Section. We were delighted to see both Mildred and her husband Ron at the meeting and hope that they will come again when time and opportunity allows. Ron, as most of you are aware, is Chairman of the Mills Archive and, as such, would welcome any contributions of historical material you may wish to have retained for posterity.

After the meeting, the members tucked into an wonderful American Supper with vast quantities of food and wine which satisfied even the biggest appetites.

On a final note, I was so pleased to announce that Ted Moss (the Manager of the Silk Mill for many years, and who was present) had just reached his 90th birthday and was looking as well as ever. Obviously, mills are good for your health

May I wish all members and friends a Happy New Year.

4th January 2004 - What a hard working and successful day we had at Eling Tide Mill. Ably organised by Dave Plunkett, a gang of some nine HMG members and friends descended on the mill to carry out a cleaning and reorganising programme. We spent the whole day (apart from a quick lunch in the "Anchor Inn") cleaning up on all floors and identifying problems mechanical and structural throughout the building. This will enable Dave to write a report to New Forest District Council with recommendations for future requirements at the mill.

Your ancient Chairman found muscles that he had forgotten he had when crawling through the undercroft and scrambling through the disused wheel on the un-restored side of the mill. Thank goodness, at this point, Dave Hibbert found an aluminium ladder to ease my plight and dignity! Seriously, I would like, as Chairman, to thank everyone who gave up their Saturday to carry out this exercise. I'm afraid it's not finished yet by any means and we shall be at the mill again next Saturday at 11:00am sharp.

7th January - With Mick, to West End to speak about the "History of the Postcard" to the West End Historical Society, and of course to look at their postcards of the local mill, Gaters Mill, which of course was Up Mill when Henri-de-Portal was serving his apprenticeship as a papermaker. Lots of pictures of the mill but nothing very fresh - nevertheless, a most enjoyable meeting with Mick able to project members postcards on to a screen for all to see. Added to this, of course, a donation to HMG was given to us at the end of the meeting.

8th January - To Longbridge Mill, with Mick Edgeworth and Basil Hunt, to raise the runner stone and clean and refurbish the stones. After removing the tun and milling furniture and repositioning the stones crane, we lifted and revolved the runner in order to check the dress. We found that the lands were rather shiny and the vales were almost full of compressed flour. Luckily, Basil had recently sharpened two mill bills and we used these to scrape out the flour and then fitted one bill into the thrift to redress both stones.

Chairman's Diary contd..

Adam (the manager of the restaurant) had arranged for a reporter from the Basingstoke Gazette to come and write a feature on the mill and its restaurant so he took pictures of our work, interviewed us and promised a boost for the Mills Group. We're looking forward to it.

10th January - The Daily Echo carries a notice of a planning application by the new lessees of Chesapeake Mill so, on Monday, I shall contact Winchester City Council and ask for copies, to see if any objections are necessary.

Further visit by HMG gang and friends to Eling Tide Mill to continue clearing and cleaning the Mill. Good attendance again, but will need at least one more visit to complete the job and maybe even more.

11th January - A small gang at Timsbury to continue work on the waterwheel at Mayfly Cottage. Despite a little rain early in the morning, we were able to continue painting the finish coat on the wheel with your unworthy chairman, standing in the river, brush in hand, for what felt like an eternity! (seriously though, we top coated a large area of the wheel). We are looking forward to getting the bearings cast and refitted to the wheel together with starts & floats and possibly sole boards. Then of course there is the matter of control & operating sluices to make and fit and then a small weir to build. Should keep us busy for a while yet!

12th January - To Winchester City Council Planning Department to look at plans being put forward by the new lessees of Chesapeake Mill. Among some good things for the building, I was very unhappy to find that they propose to put a large goods/wheelchair lift right in the middle of the main building. Tony Yoward and I will arrange a site visit and advise the council of our objections.

18th January - Further work party at Mayfly Cottage to continue restoration work on the waterwheel driven pump located in the garden. Painting was again the main occupation and again standing in the stream up to the top of your wellies for long periods is not really recommended for frosty January mornings, however, a lot more paint was applied to the wheel after it had been turned 90°. This is not as easy as it sounds because the wheel is off its bearings and at present sits on sections of old railway sleeper on the "flats" outside the journals. The painting was carried out by Mick and 'yours truly' with help from Nigel Smith who also spent a long time polishing the journals with special abrasive strips.

21st January - Dinner at the Dolphin Hotel, Southampton with the Southampton Rotary Club. After a quite excellent meal, I had to 'sing for my supper' and I spoke once again on The History of Milling. They are inviting me back again so I suppose it can't have been too bad.

23rd January - Committee Meeting of SPAB (Mills Section) at 37 Spital Square. Long meeting with many subjects covered.

26th January - With Mick to a meeting with Anthony de Sigly, the owner of Rooksbury Mill at Andover. Anthony showed us how he has restored (in some parts, almost rebuilt) the mill following the disastrous fire some years ago. He has succeeded in returning the outside of the building to almost exactly the way it must have looked during its working life. Rooksbury Mill is numbered 13 in the 'Water and Windmills of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight'. I see from the above publication that the mill bears a 'Sun Fire Insurance' plaque and that, according to notes from the 'Simmonds Collection' in 1898 an 8 hp undertype steam engine was supplied by Taskers. It was for sale in 1901 'Steam and water power, containing 1½ sack roller plant by Robinsons of Rochdale'.

No machinery of any type survives except the 'fast and loose' pulley on the sack hoist gear. Never the less, it will make a fine residence for a lucky few and we could find little or nothing to suggest that Anthony should change in his work on the mill. I have requested Tony's help in digging into the mills previous history. If anyone has any details, will you please let me know? Thank you.

In the afternoon, Mick and I did some work on the further de-scaling of the Whitchurch Silk Mill wheel. This proved to be extremely cold work and we were quite happy to stop de-scaling and lend a hand to the local gang working on the new blocks of timber to carry the bearings of the wheel. They were grouting in the timbers on the right hand side of the wheel, the left hand side having been attended to several weeks ago. Derek (the new engineer) has now received the special paint for the wheel and its fittings, so we shall soon need a paint gang to attend the mill. Can you help? If so, let me know.

Chairman's Diary contd..

4th February - Spoke to Titchfield Gardener's Club on the History of Mills & Milling resulting in another nice donation for HMG funds. A very interested audience including retired mill workers and a master baker!

9th February - Spoke to Gary Carrol of Hampshire County Council, reference, plans for Chesapeake Mill. Arranged with him to meet Tony and I for an inspection of the mill at 10am on 17th February.

15th February - Self to Timsbury to continue to paint the waterwheel at Mayfly Cottage. John C., John H., and Carol O'Shaughnessy went to Fullerton Mill, to finish refitting the three paddles removed by the Environment Agency in the 2003 floods. Apparently, one of the paddles was damaged when it was removed and this has proved to be very difficult to refit into the wheel. Because of this, there was just time for the Fullerton Party to get to Mayfly Cottage and help turn the wheel through 90° to get more of the wheel topcoated.

17th February - With Tony Yoward to meet Mr Taylor, the new Leaseholder and Gary Carrol of Hampshire County Council's Estates Dept. We inspected the mill from bottom to top internally and Tony took a series of digital photographs to represent its current state.

We discussed the Taylor and Haimes plans for work on the internal floors, including the intention to fit an internal lift to the newer part of the mill. I offered (on behalf of HMG) a work party to inspect and service machinery left in the mill. This to include the Armfield Turbine and its controls, the existing lineshafting (I was delighted to find that it still retains its original glass oilers) and the three different Armfield machines on the second floor of the mill. My offer to look after these items also includes the sack hoist and its controls. The idea being that we would refurbish the equipment to working order and then maintain it on a regular inspection service. This would ensure that all the equipment left from the mills working days is retained in good condition.

I have agreed with Mr Taylor that we would supply labour free of charge if he would pay for any materials required. I believe that, in this way, the mill will retain as much of its original character as is possible under the present circumstances. So, later in the year, we shall need volunteers to carry out the work promised. Please advise John Christmas; Mick Edgeworth or myself, if you wish to help with the work.

News from around the Country

Suffolk Mills Group - News Letter, February 2004

Woodbridge Tide Mill Quay Opening - Following a £100,000 project, mainly funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, the recently completed enhancements to the tide mill quay at Woodbridge have greatly improved the setting of the mill. The face of the quay has been reconstructed, and the whole area resurfaced with timber bollards and simple seating. The official opening is at mid-day on Friday 16th April and will include a parade of horse drawn wagons to the museums on Market Hill and then on to Buttrams Mill before returning to Woodbridge Tide Mill. The Trust is also considering applications for improvements to the mill itself with a view to returning more of the machinery to working condition.

Wessex Mills Group

Anyone with an interest in mills in South West England might be interested in the recently formed Wessex Mills Group (covering: Somerset, Dorset and Devon). The group aims to produce twice yearly newsletters and will undertake to organise visits and talks, along with other more general aims of information and the like.

Membership rates are £8 for individuals and £10 for couples at the same address. Fees can be sent to:

Claire Bartlett, Treasurer, West Sussex Mills Group, Stable Barton, Hinton, Mudford, Yeovil, BA22 8BA

Northumbrian Mills Group - Newsletter, January 2004

Armchair Research - Mike Beacham

I have found genealogical sites to be worth trawling through. I recently found a reference to a hitherto unrecorded wind-mill site in Gloucestershire on a web page which summarised the wills of a particular family. The proportion with any connection with mills or milling is, of course, extremely small, but any pages dealing with transcripts or summaries of wills are likely to be rewarding - if you plough through enough of them!

Your News & Letters

Cricket - The Return Match.....

Hampshire Chronicle August 28, 1858

“CRICKET. — The return match between the farmers and millers of the surrounding district, and which had been looked forward to with considerable interest, came off on Tuesday last at Sutton Scotney, and was the means of bringing together a very large and respectable company, consisting of the gentry, agriculturists, millers and tradesmen from every place within an extended circuit of the locality, including many from Winchester, Southampton, and other towns. It will be recollected that in the first match the millers gained an easy victory, winning in one innings; but this time fortune turned the other way, and when the stumps were drawn at sun-down, the score showed the men of the mill to be hopelessly behind. It should be mentioned, however, that the elevens were not composed of the same individual players as took part in the first match, and that the millers failed in bringing some of their most effective men to the field; indeed, their number was short when the stumps were pitched, and was obliged to be made up by taking in parties who had attended the ground merely as spectators. The farmers had one marked advantage, as fielders, that is, they were mainly composed of younger and more lithesome players than the general run of their stalwart opponents. The farmers went first to the wickets, and succeeded in placing 99 on their score, and some excellent play was exhibited on both sides in this innings, it being needless to particularise when the score itself is given below. The millers followed, and obtained 56 only; several of the eleven were run out, one good batsman lost his wicket through the ball being clumsily stopped in its career by an encroaching spectator with his back, when a fine hit had been made. The farmers, in their second innings, made 189 runs, and it being half past seven o'clock, the stumps were then drawn. The score stood thus:—

<u>The Farmers</u>			<u>The Millers</u>		
<u>1st inns</u>			<u>1st inns</u>		
Mr. Vokes, l b w, b Dance	2	not out	5	Mr. Crimble, b Sillence, jun	13
Mr. Potticary, b Hutton	25	c Permain, b Godrich	21	Mr. Godrich, run out, b Smith	1
Mr. Sillence, jun. b Dance	5	b Hutton	8	Mr. Snow, run out, b Smith	6
Mr. Cooper, b Dance	0	c B. Dance, b Potheary	64	Mr. R. Hutton, b Sillence, jun	8
Mr. W. Pern, b Dance	2	b Snow	7	Mr. Knight, run out, b Sillence jr	4
Mr. Smith, b Dance	13	b Snow	7	Mr. Dance, c Pain, b Sillence, jr	0
Mr. Tilbury, c Permain, b Dance	15	c Snow, b Hutton	13	Mr. B. Dance, b Smith	4
Mr. Rawlings, b Hutton	8			Mr. Potheary, l b w, b Smith	0
Mr. Sillence, sen. Not out	21	run out, b Hutton	2	Mr. T. Royle, r out, b Sillence, jr	6
Mr. Spencer, c Crimble, b Hutton	0	not out	43	Mr. Knight, jun. b Sillence, jun	1
Mr. Pain, c Crimble, b Dance	3			Mr. Permain, not out	6
Byes	5	Byes	19	Byes	7
Totals	99		189		56

Ken Kirsopp

What to do now? A final decider? Yes, you've got it.- you're going to have to read the next Newsletter to find out. Ed

Lyn is waiting to hear from you!!!

HAVE YOU PAID YOUR SUBSCRIPTIONS?

They were due in January

£8.00 - individual plus £1.00 for second person at same address

£5.50 - Out of County plus £1.00 for second person at same address

£15.00 - Corporate Membership

Your News & Letters

News From North Hampshire

The presentation of the Basingstoke & Deane Conservation Awards took place on 4th December at the Council Offices and were presented by the Mayor of Basingstoke, Cllr. Gerry Traynor. Those of you who were at the Christmas meeting will have seen the framed award won by the Crux Easton Wind Engine and this will be displayed in our well house. But we were also delighted to see that our near neighbour, Bere Mill at Whitchurch won the best Conversion or Alteration Award. Congratulations to Rupert Nabarro.

We were well represented at the awards having: Tony Yoward, John Silman and John Christmas; representatives from Knowles (builders), Giffords (consulting Engineers) and BET, including from the latter, their Master Engineering Craftsman, Peter Fagg and our HLF monitor. Not forgetting Frank Dowling without whom, we wouldn't have been there at all.

But before we get too "puffed up" with ourselves, we must acknowledge that our award was wholly due to many wonderful craftsmen and enthusiasts, unlike Rupert Dawnay's achievement at upper Mill and his recognition with an SPAB plaque - that really is success.

Carol and I would like to thank everyone who helped us over the past years and we're sorry we couldn't have had more of you at the awards, but it wasn't our party! We will see you all in the summer

Lyn Peet



SOMERSET IN THE AGE OF STEAM by Peter Stanier

A History and Archaeology of Somerset Industry, c 1750-1950

These were the 200 years when many industries came and went in Somerset, a county whose products are as variable as its scenery, which ranges from Exmoor and the Mendips to the Somerset levels. The industries ranged from mills to helicopters.

The area covered is the modern county since 1974, but it does manage to reach just over the border to Radstock - after all, Somerset was Somerset until the politicians got to work.

The book is comprehensively illustrated by Peter's own photographs, acknowledging those from other sources where required, and in many cases usefully giving the date when they were taken.

It is not only an introduction to Industrial Archaeology for a beginner, but an excellent book of reference for the converted. Both the table of contents and the index are clear and comprehensive and map references are given for specific sites. There is an extensive list of further reading and Peter has catered for all ages by giving measurements in both metric and feet and inches!

For the mill enthusiast, Peter deals with corn milling, both wind and water, brewing and malting through to textiles and paper making. Transport is well covered as well as the more traditional farming, cider-making and coal mining. The scope of his research into the lime and stone industries is very evident.

This 150 page book would be a worthy addition to the library of any mill enthusiast who wants to widen his interest, as he travels round the Somerset mills and if you are holidaying in Somerset and your interest is the industries of the area, this is the book for you.

Published by Somerset Books in partnership with the County Council, its 21 chapters cover the same number of Somerset industries in the 200 years after 1750 and is well worth the price of £19.95. ISBN 1 86183 481 X

Both Mary and I were born in Somerset and thoroughly enjoyed this nostalgic trip around the county.

Tony Yoward

Your News & Letters

Mills by Wheels S E Kent's Great Loss

Here today, gone tomorrow and that was in fact what happened to our 1868 Chillenden open trestle post mill (ref TR 268543) on the morning of the 26th November 2003 when at about 10:30am the mill suddenly collapsed, having been witnessed by Mr Gibson, a local farmer who was cutting cabbages in a nearby field.

Strong overnight winds may well have contributed to the collapse of the mill, which had only recently been completely restored. This will of course be a subject for debate. Although it ceased working in 1949, it has for many years been open to the public.

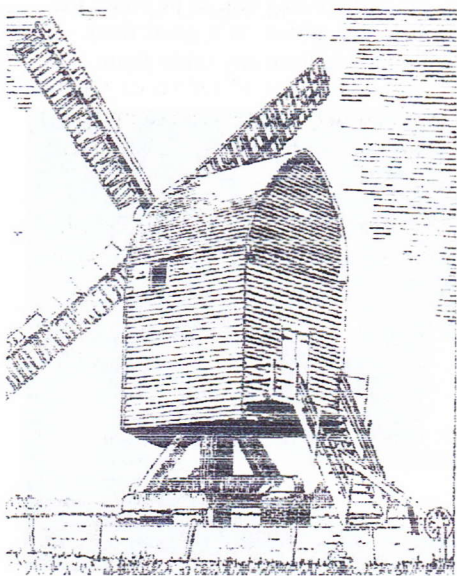
For some 132 years, this white painted post mill has been a very prominent and familiar landmark although it could so easily have met its fate on 15th September 1987, when many homes and woodlands here in Kent experienced the terrible, unexpected hurricane that zig zagged its way through parts of Sussex and South East Kent with recorded gale force winds of 100mph. Miraculously, the storms bypassed Chillenden village and mill but many other villages were badly effected. Kent had never experienced such storms since records began 300 years ago.

Dick and I managed to visit the mill site on 29th November where we joined a band of bystanders watching a small group of mill officials assembled for a site meeting, inspecting the crumpled broken heap of debris, lying before them. John George was also there and I enclose a copy of his report that will be published in the Kent Messenger this week. If anyone is interested in obtaining a booklet written by John George on Chillenden Post Mill, it can be purchased for £3 plus p&p by contacting Mrs Eryl Shaw on 01304 841043.



Chillenden Open Trestle Post Mill in ruins—2003

Patricia Parr



Chillenden Post Mill - 1868

Excerpt from John George's report—28th November 2003

..... "Having reminisced on the past, I should mention the present, the considered cause of the collapse and what is to become of the mill. The experts spent much of last Friday afternoon (28th November) at a site meeting at which I was present, and the *conclusion was that a severe gust of wind hit the mill on its eastern corner lifting the base structure sufficiently to dislodge the foot of the centre post upon which the mill body is mounted.

Being a Grade II listed building, it has to be rebuilt. It is heavily insured to enable a complete rebuild should the wooden structure have caught fire.. All salvageable parts are being stored off site locally and, apart from the brick piers, the debris will be completely removed. It is not yet possible to say when the mill will be rebuilt as it depends on the availability of the millwrights and can only take place after much planning and detailed costing plus, obtaining a new wind shaft, which will probably be a new casting. The central post will have to be renewed which is in itself a problem as good timber of that size is near impossible to obtain. It may even have to be fabricated by laminating about four pieces of smaller timber to obtain the two foot plus square section."

** a later structural report indicated there was an existing structural weakness*

Longbridge Mill

As our Chairman recorded in his diary on 8th January, he, Mick and Basil were working at Longbridge Mill that day, unaware that a reporter and photographer from the Basingstoke Gazette were also going to be there preparing an article for their newspaper, called "Pub Life". The article was featured in the Monday Gazette on 19th January and occupied a centre page spread. As well as featuring the restaurant and bar, much of the article was devoted to the mill itself. My thanks to the Basingstoke & North Hampshire Gazette for allowing us to reproduce some snippets of copy and the pictures for you. All photographs are by Richard Garfield.

Mill gets a dose of flour power

The milling tradition continues at Longbridge Mill. Harold Lailey was the last miller to live there, and it had been in his family from 1895 until the 1980s.

Now, thanks to Hampshire Mills Group, flour is being produced again—possibly following a custom that goes back beyond the time of William the Conqueror. Hampshire Mills Group Chairman, John Silman, a former vehicle seller, has a keen eye when it comes to looking at machinery. He said "This is a big and important mill, with excellent late Victorian machinery, which had four mill stones. The machinery has been restored and represents the zenith of Victorian milling technology. We would like to know who made the machinery because it's a beautiful set of iron work. Many manufacturers had their firm's name cast in the iron somewhere, but we can't find one anywhere."



John feels the work of the group is appreciated by the people who go to see the mill in action and buy its flour. Basil Hunt calls in every fortnight to run the equipment in between milling times. The retired engineer takes pride in the group's work and gets a great deal of satisfaction from it. He said "As you get older, you need bigger toys to play with!" Basil enjoys the end product too, as he bakes his own bread. He added "It's good flour. I eat nothing made from any other flour."



The group's Vice Chairman, Mick Edgeworth helps John and Basil check the mill stones. The top stone, which weighs between half and three quarters of a ton, has to be carefully taken off the base stone, where the corn is ground into flour. Mick, a retired IBM electronic engineer, said "We've been cleaning the stones and checking its dressing - the grooves in the stones. It's essential that it's done every couple of years."



Longbridge Mill contd..

Memories of working past

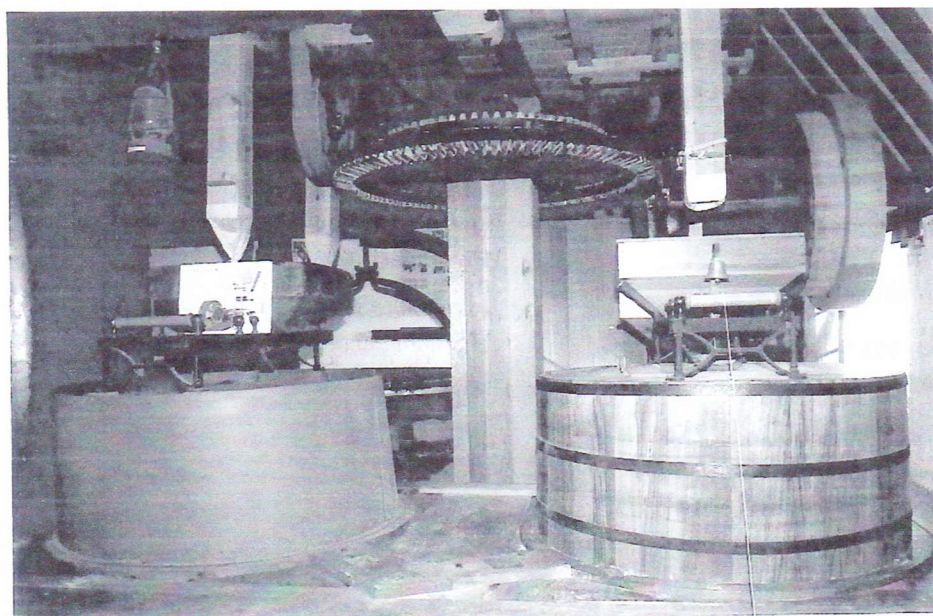
There are plenty of people who remember Longbridge Mill as a working commercial mill right up to 1977. One Sherfield-on-Loddon resident recalled going there at the age of eleven, when Mr Higgs was the carrier. Now seventy five, Eric Chamberlain said "On a Saturday morning, my brother and I used to get on the back of Mr Higgs' lorry, get the corn from the local farmers, take it to the mill and then take it back to the farmers as flour. We used to look around the mill. It was full of cobwebs and flour dust! We'd go upstairs to the stone floor where the corn was ground. When we walked along by the water wheel, there were large gaps between the planks and you could see and hear the water rushing by—it was very scary."

Cynthia Turvey, sixty nine, can remember the mill from when she was a schoolgirl. She said "We used to go there for history lessons. I was petrified because of the rats at the time. When the wheel was going, they would scamper over the paddles and I used to run away."

Like many people in Sherfield-on-Loddon and the surrounding areas, Michael Turvey, sixty eight, was saddened to see the slow decline of the mill and was shocked by the fire in 1991.

He said "I was devastated because it was part of our local history."

But he was delighted to see it rise from the ashes and now, he's a regular customer. His wife, Joan, said "The food and staff are excellent. I also come here once a month with Bramley Flower Club."



But there is something the Chamberlains and the Turveys are not too keen to see.

The ghost!

Eric said "There are stories that the mill is haunted by a white ghost covered in flour, but I haven't seen it."

If anyone does, be sure to let the manager Adam Harris know!

Basil has also lent me a collection of slides showing the fire ravaged Longbridge Mill and it's gradual restoration back to the beautiful building it has become, once again.

They will be featured in a future edition

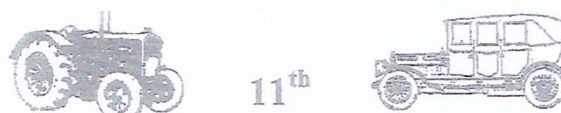
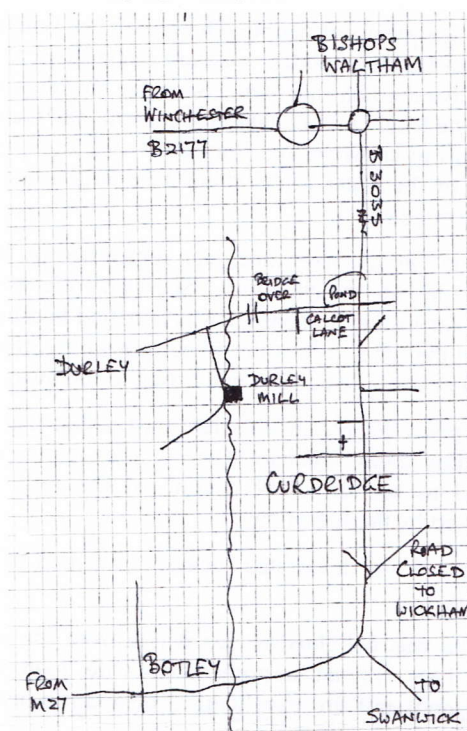
The Library

New Additions to the Library

To arrange borrowing of any listed publication:
contact Mick Edgeworth on 023 8073 2967

- In Search of English Windmills
by R. Thurston Hopkins & Stanley Freese - 1931
- Old Surrey Watermills
by J. Hillier - 1951
- Lester Pelton & the Pelton Water Wheel
by Roger P. Lescohier - 1992
- A Gazetteer of the Water, Wind & Tide Mills of Hampshire
by C. M. Ellis - 1968
(offprint of the Hampshire Field Club)
[roughly the same as the orange covered book]
- Essex Windmills
by Rex Wailes - 1957
(excerpt Transactions of the Newcomen Society)
- Windmill Land
by Allen Clark - 1916
Rambles in North Lancashire
- The Silk Industry in Evercreech, Somerset
2001
- Practical Hints on Mill Building
By R. James Abernathy - 1880
How to layout your roller mill.
- Provender Milling
By J. F. Lockwood - 1949
Manufacture of Feeding Stuffs for Live Stock
- Organization and Management in the
Flour Milling Industry.
By E. Leigh Pearson - 1933?
Administration of a mill
- The Guntersville Project. Technical Report No. 4
United States Tennessee Valley Authority - 1941
Very Large Hydro-electric generation
- Wind and Water Mills No.21 - 2002
Croxtton Windmill, Staffs
Mills at Winshill, Burton on Trent
Mill explosion at Macclesfield, Cheshire
What happened to the Millstones?
Some unusual and little known Wind Engines.

Directions to Durley Mill,
Southampton SO32 2BP
tel. no. 01489 860217
Spring Meeting - 26th March



ANNUAL VINTAGE EVENT

Nostalgic Get-Together with Reminiscences!

SUNDAY 30th MAY 2004 from 11.00 am,

Entrance £2, children & O.A.P.'s £1, free car park.

at
LORDS FARM, SHEET, PETERSFIELD, HANTS.

Tractors,
(Optional on/off Road Run at 1.00 pm)
Stationary Engines
Classic Cars, Commercial Vehicles, Motor Cycles etc.
Various Table and Field Exhibits
Rural & Domestic by-gones and Richard Moss at the Forge
Dolls, Doll's Houses with the Petersfield Miniaturists
Scale Models - Tractors, Commercial Vehicles,
Cars, Steam and new this year - model ships
Hampshire Mills Group
Vintage Lawn Mowers

Vigil German Shepherd Dog Rescue, will again be in attendance, with their Display and Stall - Re-homing about 250 plus G.S.D.'s every year throughout the Southern Counties
"You are invited to attend perhaps bring your own exhibit along and you may like to try your expertise on one of our four organs"

* * * * *

This year the money will be dedicated to "Tony Pratt".

Tony, who contracted cancer in mid 2002, passed away in March 2003. He first came to know Lords Farm, with his father "Gordon", in 1949. He attended Sparsholt Agricultural College during 1958 and then worked many years for John Lovell. After leaving he started his own haulage business. Tony was a well known figure in Sheet, and will be remembered for his kindness and sense of humour.

There will be a Car Boot & Auto Jumble in the paddock
(£5 per pitch of 10 feet).

All in aid of "The Wessex Cancer Trust."

* * * * *

Further information from John Lovell 01730 - 263508

The 2003 event raised £605 for Wessex Cancer Trust.