



Mills Archive Trust

Mill Memories

The Newsletter of the Friends of The Mills Archive

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Spring 2014

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**DON'T RE-MODEL
YOUR MILL**

until you first consult us. You want to know that better results can be obtained. The new plant should pay for the re-modelling.

ASK ROBINSONS ABOUT IT.

Roller Flour Milling ~ p. 4

The Mills Archive at a Careers Fair

Elizabeth Trout

In February I represented The Mills Archive at the annual Careers Fair held at the secondary school my son attends. Over 100 companies and organisations offer a wide range of options for post-16 education, training or work experience. I am the sole exhibitor for careers in libraries and archives.



Elizabeth on the stand at the fair.

The Archive banners are eye-catching and about a dozen pupils stopped to chat or ask about the work experience placements. Most were about to choose GCSE or A level options so I asked about their skills and interests, explaining how these can be used in libraries and archives. I also tell them about why I became a Librarian, the transferable skills I learnt, and that I still enjoy my job some 30 years later.

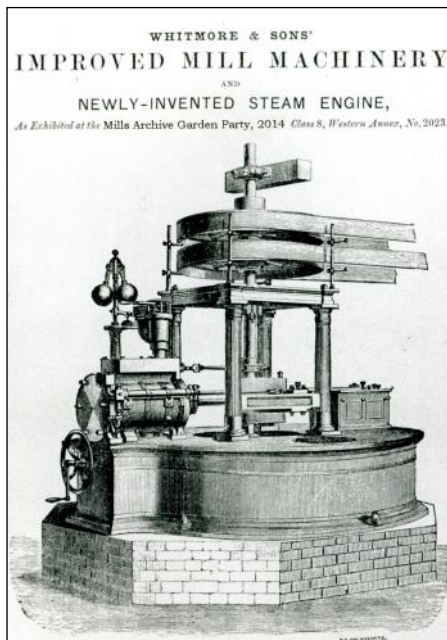
One boy came up to me on his own as his Dad was manning another stand.

"I'm really worried about my future" he said and then he told me that he was only 10! He was confident, charming, and articulate. He was keen on history and liked the idea that archivists look after rare documents and images and use that material to tell the stories of people, places and events. When I said that archivists are sometimes like detectives, he was enthralled. I watched him all evening as he talked to the exhibitors, collected information and hopefully got reassurance about his prospects. He will succeed in life as he made such a good impression.

Later in the year, The Mills Archive has been invited by the University of Reading to take a stand at their annual Careers Fair. We will be exhibiting alongside some of the biggest companies in the UK and talking about the graduate work experience placements we offer.

It's garden party time!

Liz Bartram



Above: Whitmore and Sons' steam engine advert.

Along with interesting mill-related material on display, we will have several intriguing models to observe. These include a model provided by Shaun Holmwood of a Whitmore & Binyon steam engine (similar to the one shown above), a working model of an Archimedean Screw provided by Brendan Barrow of eWaterpower; and a working oak model of a French post mill provided by Mildred Cookson (pictured right).

We hope to see you at one or both of these parties. If you would like to help during the day or have any questions, do get in touch by emailing liz.bartram@millsarchive.org. We will send out formal invitations to our Friends very soon. We look forward to meeting you.

You might have heard that we are organising two summer garden parties on 14th June and 2nd August. We are hosting these parties to thank those who have supported us and to show you the exciting developments afoot at the Archive - we hope you can make it!

The parties will feature an exhibition, during which you can meet the team, explore our facilities and see what we are already achieving thanks to your generous support. All of this will be centred on enjoying our newly landscaped garden attached to our 17th century Grade II* listed building - hopefully with lovely weather and certainly featuring delicious refreshments.

Below: Working oak model of a French post mill by Jeff Hawksley, based on a drawing from Diderot's Encyclopédie. Jeff won the Gold Medal award for this at the National Woodworkers show.



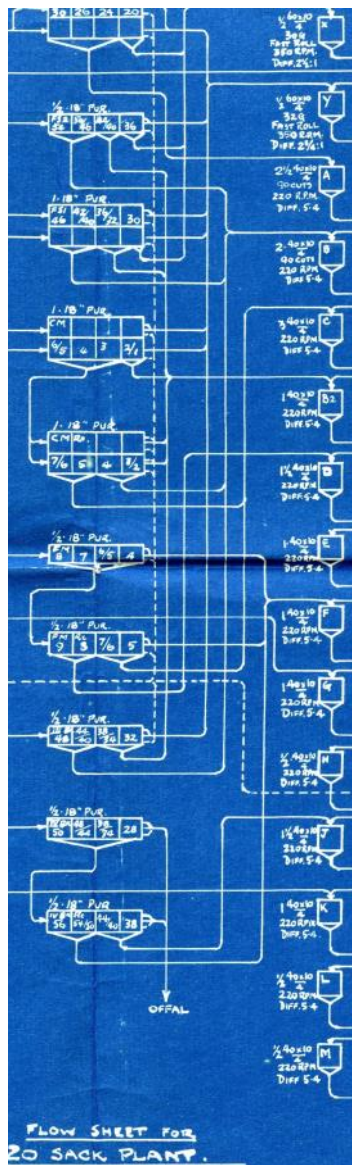
Our Roller Flour Milling Archive

Mildred Cookson

You will be hearing more over the coming months about the Mills Archive Roller Flour Mill project. The project will consist of three elements. We have already announced that we wish to build up our archive on roller flour milling and we will be looking for material to add to the collection as well as financial support to build the only dedicated national archive on this important area of our milling heritage. To support and publicise our initiative we are planning an educational programme on the full story of flour milling entitled *From Quern to Computer* as well as a travelling exhibition on the same theme.

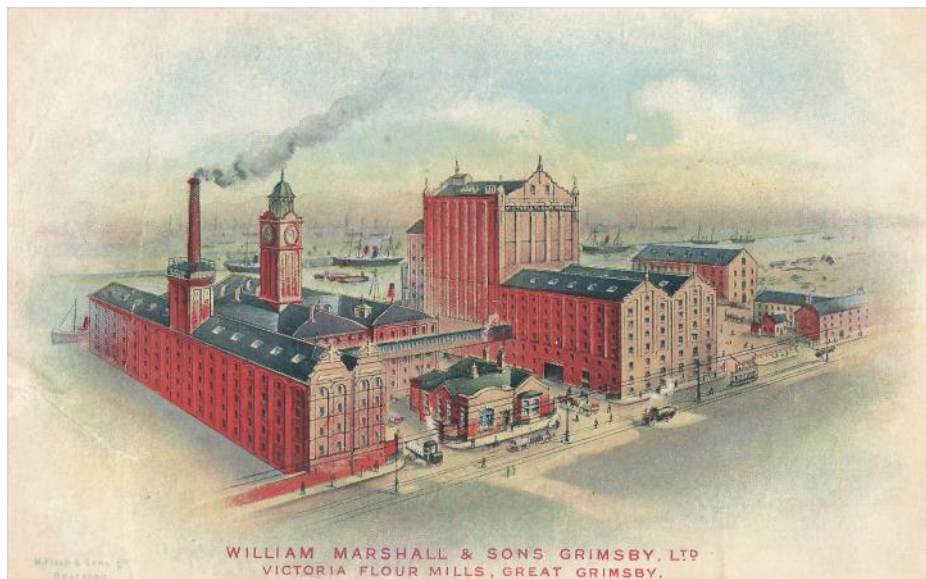
We have been identifying sources of material with the help of our project team which includes Rob Shorland-Ball and Bryan McGee, both experts on roller mills (the latter having worked in the area for all his life). We are also examining what The Mills Archive already has and this led me to go through my own collection. Expanding our archive to include roller milling has interested me for some time as I have a significant number of relevant books, photographs and old postcards as well as some superb old illustrated catalogues showing the machinery of Simon, Robinson, Turner, Armfield, Whitmore & Binyon etc.

The illustrations show a small sample of the material that will go to make up this interesting project. It has been an area neglected by traditional mill people, partly because of the complex flow charts involved and also because the mills are not as romantic to look at as a windmill or a country watermill. Many of these old roller mills have a fascinating history of their own, however. The lives of the owners, developments to the mills' machinery, the motive power and the Victorian architecture of the buildings themselves with their characteristic tall chimneys are all areas deserving further study.



Right: Flow sheet for plant at Bow Mill; Cornwell collection.

Our Roller Flour Milling Archive (continued)



Victoria Mills, Grimsby was listed Grade II in 1986. Situated in North East Lincolnshire, the current mill was designed by the Hull architect Sir W A Gelder in 1889, after the original steam driven mill was destroyed by a fire a year earlier. It was built and owned by the Marshall family who were wealthy Grimsby farmers and landowners with a milling business founded by Mr William Marshall, initially using a windmill in Chantry Lane to produce their flour. Under the management of William's sons Andrew and Charles, the Rector of Doddington, the company was one of the first mills in Britain to adapt the new system of milling using fluted chilled cast iron rollers to crush the grain.

The family previously owned a site further up on the Haven, known as Haven Mill, but the opening of Alexandra Dock meant that even larger ships could now be loaded with sacks of flour direct from the mill. The relocation to the dominant site opposite Freeport Wharf with its good road access, to build a much larger, more modern mill incorporating all the latest milling technology was an astute, well-timed move leading to commercial success.

The foundation stone of the present mill was laid in April 1889 by Mr John H Marshall. According to the Grimsby News of June 25, 1897, "the new machinery was first put in motion on December 26, 1889". This was just one year after the original mill was destroyed.

Our Roller Flour Milling Archive (continued)

During the 19th century Britain's expanding industrial cities rapidly increased the demand for flour to bake bread. The tried and tested method of using millstones to grind flour was rapidly being superseded by steam-driven, high-speed metal rollers that produced flour much faster and in greater quantities than the traditional method.



Above: Engraving from Henry Simon catalogue.

We still have some of the large milling firms in business, but there are also survivors of the time when small country and town mills were trying to keep up with the competition of the larger mills. Caudwell's mill, still working, gives us a glimpse into how a small country mill took up the challenge of going fully over to the roller system. On the Isle of Wight four watermills turned over to roller milling, Upper Calbourne being the last of the four to convert to rollers. These former small port mills were supplementing their island trade to the mainland. Today, you can still see the roller mills installed by Henry Simon at Calbourne Mill. Although these are still workable, the mill is now using millstones to produce its flour.

There are only a few reminders left in the UK now of this important phase in milling. During the late 1890's and early 1900's quite a few country mills made the transition to either replace all millstones with a complete roller plant, or to go halfway and keep one or two pairs of millstones alongside roller mills. The transition to either partial or full removal of millstones for the installation of a roller plant was not a cheap business, but some millers found it worthwhile to do so to keep up with the changing times.



Right: Roller mill machinery at Upper Calbourne Mill.

Our Roller Flour Milling Archive (continued)

Windmills were not to be left out and those at Newington Ramsgate, Watlington Norfolk, Press Brothers, Green Cap mill at Yarmouth and Tring Flour Mills were some which continued working alongside a newer, larger roller mill building. A Mr R Randerson of York had his tall seven storey windmill fitted out with a complete Henry Simon roller plant.

The Mills Archive contains material on roller flour milling from around the world, although the modern industry is poorly represented. In Hungary, the home of the porcelain rollers, there is a fine museum on the history of milling. If you know of any roller men who would be happy to talk to us about their experiences or donate any roller mill material, we would love to make contact and thus add to our new project.

Above right: Brigg windmill, Lincs, fitted with Simon roller plant.

Below: USA roller mill workers at Richelieu, Chicago, 7 October 1910.



Above: More roller mill material from the Mildred Cookson collection.

Heritage Partners and Corporate Members

Liz Bartram

Following our HLF grant success at the end of 2013, we are excited to announce that we have now extended our Friends' scheme to include attractive packages for organisations that support us.

We have consulted a range of organisations during the development process and created two new strands: our Heritage Partnership and Corporate Membership.

Heritage Partners are likely to be mills and other heritage-related businesses. We recognise that mills have a variety of educational, commercial and heritage related concerns, and that no two mills are exactly alike in their history, needs and interests. We wish to support our Heritage Partners and build a long-term relationship that is beneficial for both parties.

This is an exciting opportunity for both organisations. As a Heritage Partner, you will be working with the national centre for mill-related research and learning. We will be able to share ideas, and together we can work towards the same goal of preserving the records of our milling heritage and of encouraging the community to engage in this heritage.

There are a number of new benefits for Heritage Partners which are described in detail in our brochure, including archiving training workshops, technical advice and research services.



As part of the development of the new packages we have visited several existing mill supporters to find out their views. These are images from recent visits to High Salvington (above) and Stotfold Mill (below).



Heritage Partners and Corporate Members (continued)

Corporate Membership is available for a higher annual fee. This will typically appeal to larger businesses and those with more commercial concerns, although mills are not excluded from this strand. Benefits include those found in the Heritage Partner package as well as the following:

- Use of our facilities: our Founders' Room, an attractive meeting facility furnished to a high standard, and also use of another building for larger groups;
- Opportunity to negotiate beneficial copyright fees for larger numbers of images.

Other benefits exist for both Heritage Partners and Corporate Members.



The Founders' Room

For mills and other organisations that already support us, you will automatically be upgraded to either a Heritage Partner or a Corporate Member. We are writing to our members individually to explain how this will work, and will also send a copy of the brochure.

To request a copy of the brochure please email liz.bartram@millsarchive.org. Similarly, if you have any questions or would like to discuss this further then do send me an email.

Why I'm a volunteer

Alex Miller has been a volunteer at the Archive since last September. Here she describes how she came to get involved:

History is something that I've always been interested in; more specifically I've always had a fascination for old buildings and my favourite family days out were always to stately homes. Thankfully I had some enthusiastic history teachers at school that really made our lessons interesting.



It was during the research for my A Level Archaeology coursework that I first became particularly intrigued by mills. I discovered that there had been a windmill, built on a Bronze Age round barrow on the hill above the village I was researching, that had sadly been obliterated by one of the Palmerston Follies in the 1860s. I tried to find out more about this mill, but sadly made no progress. I wasn't aware of The Mills Archive then!

After taking all the history related courses I could at school and college I came to Reading University where I'm now reading for a degree in Archaeology and History. I joined The Mills Archive in September of 2013 and have enjoyed every minute! I heard about it from a friend who had done some volunteering here and thought it perfectly fitted my interests. It's given me the perfect opportunity to gain experience in an archive and allowed me to develop my knowledge of mills, something that I've found particularly enjoyable (it must be in the genes!). While some of my family have looked into our family history, sadly we've not managed to find any millers yet, although the name suggests that if we go back far enough we should find some. This is something I'm definitely going to attempt, when essay deadlines aren't looming!

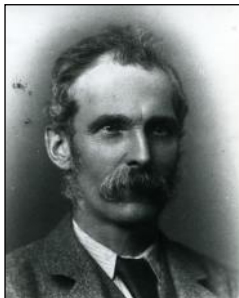


Union Mill, Cranbrook, 1945. A Jack Hodges photo from one of the East Kent Mills Group albums Alex has been listing.

KMGC-19655

Currently at the Archive I'm listing the items from the Kent Mills Group Collection, which has photos, postcards and cuttings on mills from all over the county, and also some from abroad. There have also been some pictures of the mill machinery which I've really enjoyed identifying!

The Holman Archive



Thomas Richard Holman,
1831-1897 HOLM-04-HB004



Harry Branford Holman,
1863-1950 HOLM-04-HB069



William John Holman,
1864-1954 HOLM-04-HB010

Holman Brothers was a Canterbury firm founded in 1816 by John Holman. Originally millwrights, they built smock mills in Kent as well as repairing other wind and water mills, and building two tower mills in the Middle East at Jerusalem and Haifa. Later as the demand for mills declined they also entered the agricultural machinery business, hiring steam ploughs and threshing machines to local farmers. After the company folded in 1975 the last owner, Tom Holman, passed parts of the company archive to various organisations, but some remained in the family, passing to his son Geoff, and was given to The Mills Archive following Geoff's death in 2011. A team of staff and volunteers have been working on the collection, as this article explores.

Elizabeth Trout writes: I have reviewed and edited all of Geoff Holman's brief notes on the company and the family, assisted by one of our volunteers, Guy Boocock, who used the company wage books and census information to discover more about the people who worked for the company in various different roles. The most creative way to present all this information is a timeline linked to images and documents in the Holman collections. The timeline will refer to biographies of the Holman family and a few specific staff, information on the company premises and development of the business, and mill profiles of the mills built. The Holman business will be described within the context of historical events.



Left: Some members of the Holman Family. Thomas R Holman was head of the firm in the mid-late 19th century. His sons Harry and William took over on their father's death in 1897, at which point the firm became Holman Brothers.

Above right: An early 20th century photograph showing Holman Brothers' main offices, 13 Dover Street, Canterbury. Two horse ploughs can be seen in the entrance of the yard. HOLM-04-HB012

The Holman Archive (continued)



Above: Thomas Holman surrounded by his employees. This is one of the oldest photographs in the collection, dating from the 1870s. It is a tintype, an early form of photograph produced on a sheet of iron rather than paper. The two boys on Mr Holman's right and left may be his sons, Harry and William. HOLM-04-HB058

Below: The wage books. Further such books are held by Canterbury Cathedral archives.



Guy Boocock writes: Within the collection are two Holman Bros wage books dated 1876-1880 and 1898-1901. I compiled a comprehensive list of employees from the books and cross-referenced with the data compiled by Geoff that included names of employees and some of their working durations. When an employee worked through the 1881 or 1901 England Census, I looked them up and recorded their occupations and addresses.

I also researched those who took part in theatres of war. Two employees fought in the 2nd Boer War, four in WW1, and a couple of

employees sadly died fighting in these wars. Frank R Harvey, who had survived the Boer War, later joined the Merchant Navy as an engineer having learnt his trade at Holman's. I also discovered an employee who had been brought up at the Assizes for theft of tools from a property along Dover Street, Canterbury, and had been acquitted. Mysteriously he then vanished from all records following his arrest.

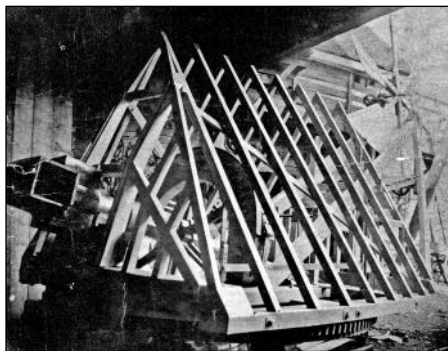
The Holman Archive (continued)



Some of the items in the collection

catalogue will be searchable online when our new online catalogue system is launched later this year; but a spreadsheet copy can be made available on request.

Nathanael Hodge writes: While Guy and Elizabeth have been extracting information from the archive to complete the research Geoff began, I have worked on producing a complete catalogue of the contents of the collection, which I submitted as a recent assignment for the archives qualification I am working towards. The collection was an interesting one to catalogue due to the variety of material involved, including 19th century ledgers and wage books, agricultural trade catalogues, correspondence, plans, legal documents and rough notes, as well as a large series of original photographs (such as those illustrating this article). The



Left: Another early photograph showing the cap for the mill in Haifa, Syria (now Israel) waiting in the Holman workshop. It was shipped out by steamship bound for Alexandria in 1874, in eleven pieces, one of which was lost overboard. HOLM-04-HB116



Right: While the work of the firm shifted towards agricultural machinery in the 20th century, the Holmans continued millwrighting when called upon. Here employee Bob Barber is working on a sweep for Chillenden Mill.

HOLM-04-HB009

Space prevents us from featuring here the various others who have worked on the collection, but a future issue may explore the work of Mildred Cookson, who has been recompiling Geoff's information on the Holman windmills into profiles; and Rob Cumming, who is in the process of transcribing details from the large ledgers.

Making a difference: Helen Major (1927 – 2013)

Helen was well known in the mill world and much loved as an active volunteer at The Mills Archive. On her death she left a large legacy to The Mills Archive Trust to enable us to improve our services, increase our ability to protect records of our milling heritage and make a start on ensuring our long-term sustainability.

The Lady

Helen's precise attention to detail gave our researchers more than 20,000 names to add to the family history databases from the Yowards and others. Her previous career as a Civil Service proof reader meant she used to check all our publications; our editors now have their work cut out to avoid stylistic and grammatical errors. Her dry wit and ability as a mimic enlivened our tea breaks and her lovely singing voice and ability to write irreverent poems were enchanting. We will miss her.



Her Legacy

During her later years Helen took great interest in the Archive's involvement of young people and was delighted to see how they developed professional skills, becoming interested in mills at the same time. She saw this as a vital part of our role if we are to ensure that future generations are able to access and appreciate valuable and vulnerable records of our milling heritage.

The trustees have followed her wishes and opened three designated funds, for specific purposes, which will mark a first step in ensuring the long-term sustainability of The Mills Archive. In addition she would have been pleased that she could help us to upgrade our computer network, so that we can now handle those days when we have 9 or 10 volunteers working at the same time. We are also investing some of the legacy during 2014 to launch our new catalogue and website.

The Archivist's Fund

Helen saw very clearly that as we developed we would need to offer full-time security to qualified professionals. Our new Archivist's Fund is designed to provide sufficient financial backing to allow for the continuing training and employment of our professional staff. The long-term survival and development of The Mills Archive hinges on involving the right people with the appropriate professional skills.

Making a difference (continued)

The National Archives Accreditation Standard (2013) envisages an archive such as ours employing a professional archivist in a senior position. As the Fund grows, it will provide the capital base to give us the financial security to do this. Over time we hope other Friends and supporters will feel that they can add to the fund to build the six-figure sum we need.

As well as being an essential step on the road to national accreditation, such a permanent post would introduce new skills, ensure that we better protect our collections and make them more accessible to the public and to other academic institutions.

The other two funds that Helen has helped to establish are our Research and Education Fund and our Building Fund. More details of both these funds will feature in future editions of *Mill Memories*.

Bookshelf



This section is devoted to books in The Mills Archive. It looks at recent additions and interesting mill books in our collection of some 4,000 volumes. The library catalogue is on our website at <http://www.millsarchivetrust.org/index.php/library>.

We also feature examples of the books we have for sale. These are either new or surplus to our library collections, and can be ordered online at <http://shop.millsarchivetrust.org/>.

On the Road!

The annual meetings of the SPAB Mills Section give us the opportunity to display a selection of the hundreds of books we have for sale. If you asked at a second-hand bookshop for any books on mills, you would very rarely find anything interesting. Now, with these meetings, there is an Aladdin's cave of choices to explore – and it is much more fun than browsing the Internet.

Right: Tom and Margaret Derbyshire setting up the bookshop at the SPAB Spring 2014 Meeting.



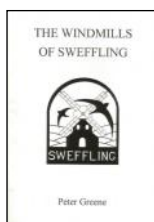
On the Road! (continued)

Although you can view all of the 250 watermill books and 360 windmill books currently on our website, there is still a lot to be said for the serendipity of that sudden discovery as you browse through physical books on our display tables. Alternatively, in response to a number of requests from Friends, you will be able to visit Watlington House and browse to your heart's content in our upgraded facilities. Both approaches can also save you a lot of money on postage (which went up again at the beginning of April). Just email enquiries@millsarchive.org to arrange an appointment.



New books

Friends of The Mills Archive have published two books since the last issue. Both are available from the online shop (or you can write in or send an email).



The Windmills of Sweffling by **Peter Greene** is a history of milling by wind and steam in Sweffling, a small village in Suffolk. As well as the history of the village's three windmills the book covers the relationship between four local milling families.

Card cover booklet, 21cm x 15cm, 30 pages with 10 photographs (£3.99 + p&p).

The Mills Research Group has continued its excellent series of **Conference Proceedings**, this time by combining the 23rd and 24th Conferences. This publication covers *Economic Grinding; Ryde Water and the Mills; Identifying Tower Mills; Mills, Maladies and Magic; Anglesey Tide Mills; Were the Mills Stones really from la Ferre-sous-Jouarre? and Ronald Hawksley Mill Pictures*.

Card cover booklet, 21cm x 15cm, 40 pages with monochrome illustrations (£4.50 + p&p).



Visiting The Mills Archive

Friends and members of the general public are welcome to visit us in Reading. The address is on the back page and our website includes an interactive map.

Our **Library and Research Centre** are on the ground floor of Watlington House, and we are convenient for the town centre with free car parking.



As we are open only when volunteers are working, it is important that you make an appointment before travelling. We can arrange to be open **most working days** between 10 and 4. **Saturday mornings** are sometimes possible as well.

We strongly encourage you to let us know beforehand of any specific research you are undertaking, so that we can retrieve the files from our store **before you arrive**.

Email enquiries@millsarchive.org 1–2 weeks before your planned trip and offer us alternative dates if possible. We will do our best to be there when you need us.



*The Mills Archive Library
and Research Centre
Ground floor access
Free car park
Appointment necessary*

Please join the Friends of The Mills Archive

*“Our Friends
are our future!”*



Our Friends are the lifeblood of the Archive. Their support helps to preserve vulnerable collections that would otherwise be at risk of being lost forever. We safeguard the memories for generations to come and provide all these services free to the general public. Without regular public support, we could not do this. Such support is a major influence on grant-giving bodies such as The Heritage Lottery Fund which likes its grants to echo public interest. Regular donations by many people are the best way of signalling that interest and guaranteeing the long-term success of The Mills Archive.

As an individual, the best way to support us as a Friend is to set up a standing order for £5 per month or more, and we would ask you to complete and return the standing order form opposite. You may donate annually if you prefer, and single donations are always very welcome. You can also donate by cheque or join online at <http://tinyurl.com/nea2uub>

Key Benefits for Individual Friends

Mill Memories every six months

Invitations to exclusive Friends' events.

Discounts on purchases from our online bookshop

Free high-resolution images

Waiving of copyright fees

Much-reduced research fees

Read more on these benefits in the “Friends’ Services” section of our website. New and additional benefits will be announced in Mill Memories, so watch this space!

*“Help us to save
the memories”*



Visit our Website

www.millsarchive.org

Internet shop

Family History Searches

Library Catalogue

Featured Mills

Mill Writing blog

Archive Catalogue

I wish to join the Friends of The Mills Archive and I have completed the standing order form for at least £5 per month

Or I wish to be put on the *Mill Memories* mailing list (small donation appreciated)

And I am a UK taxpayer so you may reclaim Gift Aid on my contribution (*please delete if not appropriate*)

Name _____

Address _____

Postcode _____ Tel _____

Email _____

Note we will not divulge your information to any other organisation or individual.

Standing Order Form	To	Bank	Branch
Address		Postcode	
Please Pay SANTANDER plc, BOOTLE Sort code 09-01-53 Account No 21695488			
Credit THE MILLS ARCHIVE TRUST			
The Sum of £_____ (amount in words: _____)			
Commencing _____ and then every _____ (due date & frequency)			
Until further notice or until _____ and debit my/our account accordingly			
Name of account _____		Account No _____	
This replaces my/our previous standing order for the transfer of £_____ to the same account			
Name _____		Signature _____	
Name _____		Signature _____ (if second required)	
Address _____			
_____		Postcode _____	



The Friends of The Mills Archive

Part of The Mills Archive Trust

Registered Charity no 1155828

**Watlington House
44 Watlington Street
Reading, RG1 4RJ
United Kingdom**

The Friends of The Mills Archive are dedicated to aiding the work of The Mills Archive Trust and we value new members. We extend a warm welcome to family, local and national historians as well as to those who simply want to find out more about our milling heritage.

As a Friend you are supporting the care and public access to one of the world's great mill collections. It is an Aladdin's cave filled with memories, free to users and run by volunteers. The collections show the rich and diverse crafts, people, buildings, machinery and equipment involved with mills in the UK and around the world.

Friends enjoy a number of benefits (see page 18) as well as knowing they are helping to protect an unrivalled world-class resource.

Please help us to save the memories!

*For more information write to the address above or email us
friends@millsarchive.org*

In the Next Issue of Mill Memories

Millwrights: Past and Present

The role of the millwright is pivotal in keeping our few mills we have left in good order, whether working or just watertight and stable. At The Mills Archive we now have numerous collections from millwrights around the country and abroad, as well as many old and modern photos of millwrights at work. The next issue of Mill Memories will explore our collection and bring together a sample of what we hold on this important area.



All change at the Archive

Founded in 2002, the Archive has grown and matured over the past twelve years. As a result we have decided to upgrade our charitable status. On the 1st April 2014 we became a charitable incorporated organisation, and our charity number changed to 1155828. More details on the value of this legal change for charities may be found on the Charity Commission website.