

Mill Memories

The Newsletter of the Friends of the Mills Archive



Care to Volunteer?

Friends of the Mills Archive frequently acknowledge the good work being done by our volunteers. Local mill enthusiasts and people with more general interest have been the backbone of the Archive since it was established almost ten years ago.

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Our new work experience programme continues to attract young people intent on becoming archivists (see page 3). Work on the collections we hold is accelerating, putting new pressures on the Mills Archive Trust, requiring us to create new positions in our trustee body and to look at different ways to raise money.

In the last issue we commented on the HLF and the funding shortage for heritage projects. As a response, we have set up a team of volunteers to concentrate on raising our profile and attracting support from other sources. The team currently has four members and if you can spare time to help, we would be pleased to hear from you.

We are seeking people with an interest in charity work and are also considering strengthening our Board of Trustees by recruiting a Secretary or Treasurer (see page 3).



Special features:

This issue focuses on the Mills

With your support and help the Archive will reach its tenth anniversary in excellent shape - but with additional volunteers and funding there is always more we can do!

Ron Cookson (Chairman)

The Mills Archive's Research Prize

As part of its brief “to promote, encourage or undertake research and disseminate the useful results of such research” the Mills Archive is launching two research competitions with cash prizes and guarantees of publication.

The research must be on a topic connected with traditional milling, by wind, water or muscle power. It must be original, previously unpublished and written in English.

The competition is open to anyone over the age of 18 on the date of submission. Six months before the submission deadline, researchers must choose which of the two competitions they wish to enter and inform the judges of the intended title. **There is no entry fee.**

Two prizes are on offer, and the entries will be judged by a panel comprising two Trustees from the Mills Archive Trust, together with one ‘lay’ member selected by them who has mill expertise appropriate to the subject matter. The panel’s decisions are final and it is not obliged to explain them.

- **The Mills Archive Research Prize of £500** is for a major piece of research of about 25,000 words. The winning entry will be presented as a stand-alone individual edition, published by the Mills Archive Trust.
- **The Mills Archive Research Award of £50** is for shorter research communications of about 5,000 words.
- **The winning entry will be published** in a special edition of *Mill Memories*.

Illustrations are not essential for either competition and the work may draw on items deposited in the Mills Archive. Use of the Archive and its holdings is recommended but is not a condition of entry. A public lecture, to be delivered at the Mills Archive in Reading, may be arranged if it seems appropriate.

The deadline for submission is **31st May 2012** (but titles are required by **1st December 2011**). The full rules of the competition are available at http://www.millsarchivetrust.org/index.php/mills_archive_research_prize/rules_for_the_mills_archive_research_prize_competition/ and also by request to: The Research Management Board, The Mills Archive Trust, Watlington House, 44 Watlington Street, Reading, RG1 4RJ, UK



News from the Archive

At the moment, the Mills Archive is moving ahead rapidly in several areas. We recently welcomed **three new volunteers** to our team, two of whom are doing work experience with us. But with more people we can do even more! See below.

Our **regular volunteers** continue to make steady progress on the cataloguing of our collections. You can read about the work on the collections on pages 4-9. In addition, we have added thousands of new names to our family history database and hundreds of additional items to our web catalogue at www.millsarchive.com.

A recent visitor to Watlington House was Nick Farries who added six large boxes of material to the collection previously donated by the family of **Kenneth G Farries**, the well-known author of windmill studies of Essex, Surrey and London. Kenneth Farries' work is widely accepted as some of the best mill literature available, and was the subject of an article in *Mill Memories 2*.

We are grateful to Friend of the Mills Archive **William Hill** who has donated his father's large collection of mill books, many of which are new to the Library.

We look forward to welcoming the **Sussex Mills Group** on a visit to Watlington House in July, and hosting the Autumn Meeting of the **SPAB Mills Section** in November.

Would you like to lend a hand?

We are looking for mill people with skills or interests that would complement our Trustee Body. Do you have experience of any of the areas below and can you spend some time helping us to develop these functions? If so, please contact the Chairman, Ron Cookson (millsarchivetrust@gmail.com) or Vice-Chairman, Peter King (pgking47@gmail.com).

Skills or Experience	Function
Finance or book-keeping	Treasurer
Legal or Charity administration	Secretary
Fund-raising	Fund-raiser
Copy writing (web or print), journalism	PR

As we evolve, these jobs will open the way for a new volunteer to join the Board of Trustees of the Mills Archive, should that also be of interest.

The Mills in Art Collection

David Neaves

Painting and drawing mills was, and still is, a favoured subject by artists. In the era pre-dating photography, in many instances, these artistic images represent the only visual representations of mills that have long since disappeared.

Amongst the many items and collections donated to the Mills Archive are numerous pictures of mills that have been illustrated by artists over the centuries. These artistic impressions have now been brought together in a Mills in Art Collection.

The Archive's volunteer team is cataloguing the collection of images that are in the form of postcards or larger format pictures of mills depicted in drawings and paintings as works of art. So far, over 2,000 items have been catalogued, and of these 750 are watermills.

The project records data about each image on an Excel spreadsheet in 11 volumes as below. This allows the catalogue of images to be sorted by country, county, mill type, artist, date. It also allows the list to be easily updated as more artistic images come to light.

Example categories include:

- Postcards - Post Mills of England
- Postcards - Smock Mills of England
- Postcards - Tower Mills of England
- Postcards - Watermills of Great Britain
- Postcards - Watermills - Foreign
- Postcards - Windmills - Foreign
- Reprints of Art Works including Lithographs, Etchings and other types of prints
- 35mm Photographic Slides of art works
- Small original art works (watercolours, pencil drawings, sketches, etc)



Dating of images can be taken from published records of artist's works, where the artist has signed/dated the work or from the period the artist worked.

Copyright of these artistic works is a problem. In most cases, this still rests with the artist or with the organisation that commissioned the work. The Mills Archive is investigating how to overcome the many copyright issues so that as many images as possible can be made available via the Archive's web catalogue.

Working on the HES Simmons Collection Talbot K Green

Herbert Edward Sydney 'Sid' Simmons (1901–1973) was a prolific mill researcher and photographer. His collection covers almost every windmill site in the country - as well as numerous watermills - and its scope and quality are staggering.

Sid's documentary material was donated to the Science Museum after his death but the Mills Archive holds an impressive collection of nearly every mill photograph he took - a total of 1148. Many of his best photographs were reproduced in postcard form, for sale or distribution among his friends. These have been digitised and appear on our web catalogue.

The first postcards that Sid produced seem to be from photographs taken in 1931 but the majority date from the middle and late 1930s. As an example, on 4th November, 1931 he was at Porchester in Hampshire recording the remains of Wicor tower mill. His windmill portfolio is strongly centred on the Home Counties, since he lived at Portslade and then Shoreham, whence he could cycle to sites in Sussex, Surrey and Kent. When venturing further afield into East Anglia, for example, he benefited from the pre-Beeching local rail network and based himself in some small town before cycling round the neighbouring mills. Sporadic forays to counties further north, like Northants, Lincolnshire and even Yorkshire, were clearly interesting to his market; for he was a brilliant photographer.



Sid Simmons (right) with Donald W Muggeridge, a contemporary mill researcher, photographed on a field trip to Sussex in 1935. Donald and Sid regularly exchanged mill photographs and information..

His watermill pictures, too, mainly cover Southern Counties, specifically Bucks, Essex, Hants, Kent, Northants, Suffolk, Surrey, Sussex, with the odd scene in Cambridgeshire, Hunts, Somerset, Wilts and even Cumbria. A few Scottish mills were covered, but the locations are scattered. Given his comprehensive coverage of Norfolk's windmills, the lack of watermill pictures may mean he'd already too much local competition to deem it worthwhile: or else he had agreed a demarcation line!

Working on the HES Simmons Collection *(continued)*

Following the general availability of panchromatic film in 1938 he made a special effort to get a new series of watermill pictures, managing to carry this activity on well into World War 2. His dates show, for example, that on 28th May, 1939, he made a tour through NE Hampshire and then back into Sussex to take pictures at Binsted's Isington Mill, the Old and New Mills at Sheet, Greatham, and the mills at Holybourne before visiting Iping, Rogate and Terwick on his way home. The following day he was back in Hampshire to cover mills at Greywell, Andwell, Newnham, Basing, Bramley, Sherfield-on-Loddon, Hartley Wespall, Mattingley,



Above: Hagworthingham tower mill, Lincolnshire, photographed on 26th June 1935. The mill must have been working at the time as its sails are slightly blurred.



Left: Miller Daniel Clover and his son, Wilfred, standing at the door of Drinkstone smock mill, Suffolk, in 1938.

Dogmersfield, Bentley, Headley and Bramshot, popping over the border to visit nearby Farnham.

Sid was still at it in June 1941, going to watermill sites in Surrey and Sussex, which makes me think he must have been in uniform of some kind. To be

Working on the HES Simmons Collection (continued)



Left: A moody internal view of the millstone floor of an unidentified watermill.

Bottom: The remains of Ratham watermill, Sussex, following a devastating fire

found wandering around the countryside using a camera in civilian clothes would have landed you straight in trouble with the local Home Guard, in those days when everyone was on the watch for German spies. Although most of his earlier work was done using the famous bicycle - with its white mudguards - I think he probably had a car by this time.

I've heard he was employed on hush-hush duties in the War, being based for some time at Aldershot. Later on he was able to take windmill photographs in Yorkshire, the location of many Bomber Command airfields, in 1942/43; he was still exploring the depths of Warwickshire in 1944 and '45. A friend has been to the National Archives and the RAF Museum at Hendon, to see whether there's any record of his involvement with war-related work, eg. crash investigation, but has had no luck. After the War Sid carried on briefly in Norfolk, taking new shots at e.g. Scoulton and

Wicklewood tower mills in September 1947 and the remains of Topcroft post mill in June 1948, but the market for photographs of picturesque, decaying old mills doesn't seem to have existed in the austerity of post-War Britain.



People Pages: Dolman, Whitmore and Binyon

Chris Wheeler, one of our newest volunteers, describes the cataloguing work he is doing on the Peter Dolman Collection.

First, let me introduce myself, my name is Chris Wheeler, and I am one of five hundred lucky winners of the Vodafone World of Difference UK programme. This programme aims to help charities by allowing people such as myself to work there on a full time basis for two months. I have been working at the Mills Archive for the previous six months gaining work experience as a volunteer for two days a week. So for me to be able to work here at the Archive on a full time basis and to give something back is fantastic.



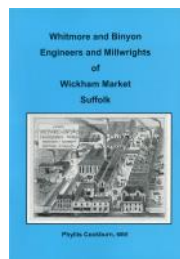
Chris Wheeler working on the Peter Dolman collection at Watlington House.

Due to Peter Dolman's love of Suffolk and its wind and water mills, it meant that he took many photographs of the different mills in the area. Consequently, these all need to be sorted, scanned, indexed and then stored properly in albums. I am only just beginning to realise how many Suffolk windmills begin with the letter B..... let's just say that Peter took plenty of photographs of them!

During Week 3 a member of the public expressed an interest in the collection that Peter had on Whitmore & Binyon, so it shows that I must be doing something right! Whitmore & Binyon were a company set up by John

Whitmore in the late 18th century that produced milling machinery for all sorts of wind, water, steam and flour mills. The company was based in Wickham Market, Suffolk, and later acquired offices in London, and was one of the foremost companies in producing milling machinery throughout the 19th century. Sadly, at the end of the 19th and early 20th century, the company went out of business and all the property was sold off at auction.

Most of this week I have been scanning, digitising and cataloguing many photographs that Peter took of various windmills and watermills that



Phyllis Cockburn's booklet on Whitmore & Binyon is available from the Mills Archive bookshop for £4 + P&P:

People: Dolman, Whitmore and Binyon (continued)

used Whitmore & Binyon milling machinery. The one thing that did strike me whilst sorting through all this material is just how rapidly Whitmore & Binyon declined as a company. The company steadily increased its output of milling machinery throughout the early to mid 19th Century until the introduction of new iron roller mills in the 1870s and 1880s. In this period the company really took off, and built an astonishing 45 new roller plants by the mid-1890s, reaching its zenith. The amount of Whitmore & Binyon advertisements that I came across in

Peter's collection show this to be true! Yet just a few years later, at the dawn of the twentieth century, the company had closed down. It is a sad story and sadly reminiscent of today's world.

My role is not just limited to scanning and cataloguing – quite often there is quite a bit of research work and to be carried out where I have to use my initiative. Some of the photographs and drawings of machinery and mills that I have come across in the past two weeks have been unlabelled. Thus it takes a bit of investigative work to search through our catalogue and see if they match up with any of the existing mills on the database.



*Peter Dolman,
photographed at
Thelnetham Windmill,
Suffolk,
in 1996*



Smith and Girling's Steam Mill, Southwold, Suffolk.

According to Peter's notes in the Suffolk Mills Group Newsletter in the early 1990s, this steam mill was built in 1894 and used Whitmore & Binyon machinery in the form of a roller plant.

The company seemed to be initially successful, with the offices situated close by the mill in Southwold. However, the company seemed to cease operationally and the mill itself effectively closed down as an operating concern in 1901. This was the same year that the Whitmore & Binyon offices and works were auctioned off. Is the decline of Smith & Girling's steam mill, that used Whitmore & Binyon machinery, directly related to the demise of Whitmore & Binyon itself, or was it simply a coincidence? The mill itself was converted into flats later on, and that is how it appears today.

Bookshelf



This section is devoted to books in the Mills Archive. It looks at recent additions and interesting mill books in our collection of more than 2,000 volumes. The library catalogue is on the Friends' website at www.millsarchivetrust.org.

We also feature examples of the books we have for sale. These are all surplus to our needs, as we keep at least two copies for the library. The bookshop is also on the Friends' website at <http://shop.millsarchivetrust.org/>.

When is a mill not a mill?

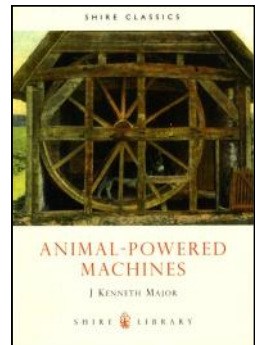
Luke Bonwick

The Mills Archive maintains a comprehensive database of information about mill sites, known as the Mills Index. This mainly relates to the UK, although we are working on the development of our indexes to cover other areas of the world.

The Mills Index is based on a countrywide study of mill sites published in the late 1990s by the Mills Research Group, and kindly supplied to the Mills Archive on its formation in 2002. Several regional correspondents contributed to this impressive database, and continue to do so. Over the last nine years, projects run by the Mills Archive have focused on different areas of the country such as Kent, Dorset and the North East, enabling us to improve and expand the parts of the Index covering these areas. We plan to continue this process as resources and manpower permit.

The Mills Index contains two specific fields that enable us to define what a mill is and identify what the scope of our collections should be. These are "Power Source" and "Purpose".

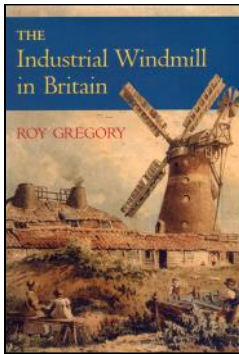
"Power Source" seems, initially, quite simple. Windmills employ sails and watermills have waterwheels to convert kinetic energy from moving wind or water to rotatory energy. But what about mills with supplementary steam engines, or those built to run by steam only? Other types of engine were traditionally used as well, such as suction gas, oil, petrol and, finally, electricity, which is used to power modern mills today. Surely these are of interest to us too?



Kenneth Major's 1977 study has recently been reprinted by Shire Publications

When is a mill not a mill? (continued)

Kenneth Major authored several books on muscle-powered mills that operated using the effort of humans and animals. The rotary quern, powered by human effort and dating back to the Iron Age, is the earliest form of mechanical mill. Its technology was progressively developed and larger examples turned by mules were in use during the middle Roman period. Mildred Cookson's collection contains examples of camel-powered mills, bovine mills and even canine mills! Muscle-powered mills are therefore of significance to those studying the origins of the traditional mill.

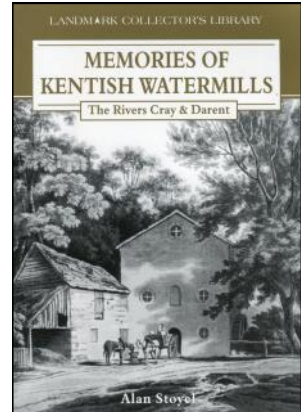


Roy Gregory's book lists 262 windmills used for industrial processes other than corn milling.

which windmills were employed, in addition to corn milling and land drainage. In total, these comprise thirty separate processes. The categories separate windmills into those that turned millstones and other machinery to crush materials such as oil seed, clay or stone; those that processed organic materials such as tobacco, textiles and drugs for medicinal purposes; those used for brass making, mining and quarrying; those used in the papermaking process; those used to convert timber and mills that supplied water for various purposes.

"Purpose" is where problems with defining a mill begin to emerge. Most people's idea of a mill involves the processing of grain to produce flour, which is strictly *meal* unless it has been sieved (*dressed*) into its component parts for use in the baking process. Corn mills were used to grind a variety of cereals and pulses to provide milled products for baking, distilling and for animal feed. The power developed by a mill, equivalent to several horse power, could be used for a variety of other purposes too.

Roy Gregory and Alan Stoyal have recorded a wide variety of functions carried out by traditional windmills and watermills. In *The Industrial Windmill in Britain* (2005, Phillimore), Gregory identifies six broad categories in



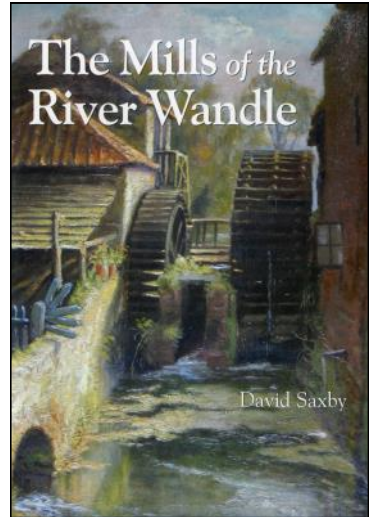
Alan Stoyal grew up in west Kent and this book includes the author's own photographs of several fascinating water-power sites that have since been lost.

Bookshelf When is a mill not a mill? (continued)

Through his research into the watermills of Kent, Alan Stoyel has identified several industries for which waterwheels, rather than windmills, were better suited. Waterwheels were more versatile, and were therefore more widespread, than windmills, so they were used for an even greater variety of functions. Textile manufacture using watermills was carried out across the country. Waterwheels used for cotton- and wool-spinning, driving fulling stocks and textile-printing machinery were all to be found in Kent. Gunpowder manufacturing works and ironworks also tended to be water-powered rather than wind-powered. Kent watermills were even employed in hatmaking, rubber pouch making, spit turning and organ blowing!

In summary, the Mills Archive was formed in order to preserve records of traditional mills driven by wind, water and muscle power. This information forms the core of our collections. We aim to keep the scope of the Archive broad in order to encompass information on mills used for different purposes, as well as those driven by other power sources. Inevitably, there will be cut-off points, and we cannot hope to cover large, modern, electrically-powered milling 'factories', or installations with no direct milling collection such as steam-powered waterworks. The relatively low cost of digital storage, however, allows us to set ambitious targets. In the future we will continue to broaden the coverage of our website catalogue to maximise the value of the collections we hold and to reflect the diverse interests of their collectors.

The Mills Archive's bookshop at <http://shop.millsarchivetrust.org> includes several titles relating to the industrial uses of windmills, watermills and muscle mills.



The River Wandle rises in Croydon and Carshalton, Surrey, and flows for 19 kilometres (12 miles) to Wandsworth, where it joins the Thames. This relatively short stretch of river powered many watermills employed in a wide range of industrial uses, from gunpowder manufacture to parchment making, as well as several textile processes including calico printing. David Saxby's new booklet describes the numerous surviving remains of these industrial buildings.

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 office and research centre are on the ground floor of Watlington House, and we are convenient for the town centre with a large free car park.

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.

It will save you time if you can 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 info@millsarchive.com 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 Room
Ground floor access
Appointment necessary*



Watlington House

Free car park

10 minutes' walk from

Reading Station

Please join the Friends of the Mills Archive



Opening the Library 2006

As the Archive plans for the long term, monthly standing orders are vital to ensure that regular costs are covered by regular income. So to qualify for full membership, we ask you to complete and return the standing order form opposite. Single donations are also very welcome, and in return for a donation of £25 we will send you three free copies of *Mill Memories*.

Regular public support is a major influence on grant-giving bodies. The Heritage Lottery Fund, a generous supporter of our cataloguing, likes to feel its grants 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.

Key Benefits of Membership

*“We all need
Friends!”*

Mill Memories, every 6 months.

Two free invitations to exclusive Friends' events.

Internet privileges including:

- Discounts on purchases from our Internet shop
- Early warnings of additions to our shop
- Waiving of copyright fees
- Much-reduced research fees

10 high-resolution images each year from the Mills Archive, emailed on request.

Additional benefits will be announced in *Mill Memories*.



The Friends' Website

Check the Friends' Website www.millsarchivetrust.org

Internet shop

Mills Archive Library Catalogue

News of Mills

Mystery Mills and Oddities

Friends' Notice Board

Mill Writing blog

Family History Searches

Useful Links

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 only to receive *Mill Memories* and enclose a cheque for £25 payable to The Mills Archive Trust

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 1091534

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

The Friends of the Mills Archive are dedicated to supporting 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.

The Mills Archive is 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 14) 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@millsarchivetrust.org*

In the Next Issue of Mill Memories

Cataloguing

At

Photographic

Sid Simmons was a superb
