



Why I'm a Volunteer

Naomi Pink



My name is Naomi Pink, and I've been volunteering at the Mills Archive as a way to stay involved in the field whilst saving up funds for a MA in archiving.

I was previously a Trainee Archivist with the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, but when my contract ran out, I struggled to find another archiving job close by which didn't require the MA.

Professionally, I would say the experience I've gained as a volunteer has truly been invaluable: I've learned how to use an unfamiliar cataloguing system, and how to handle and digitise photographic negatives.

Personally, to use the cliché, I just really love being a volunteer! The building is very atmospheric, I love the gardens during the summer, and I learn so much about the day to day running of the Archive just by being here.

Currently, the major project I'm involved with is the James Venn Collection. I'm slowly working my way through a large number of Stanley Freese and James Venn negatives, scanning and repackaging them to prevent further degradation. In my opinion, these images are particularly interesting because they show many aspects of what mills were like during the 1930s. There are external views taken from different angles, close-ups of machinery, and even some showing the workers and locals for whom the mill was a big part of the fabric of their daily lives. The ultimate goal is to get them catalogued so everyone can view them online!

Below left: Brakewheel, Nyetimber, c 1940. Centre: Mr Ball, miller at Patcham, 1936. Right: Looking up the inside of the tower, Winterbourne Gunner, Wilts, 1938.

