

## HWPS MILL TOUR OF SOUTH LINCOLNSHIRE

On the weekend of the 18/19th June 2005, Holgate Windmill Preservation Society are organising a tour of South Lincolnshire mills. Starting from York on the Saturday this unique tour will encompass visits to eight windmills/watermills, guided tours, transport in a coach or mini-bus, entrance to the mills, an overnight stay in a hotel in Boston with breakfast and return journey to York on the Sunday. Dinner and lunches are not included in the price.

**All this for around £60.00 per person** (based on two people sharing a double room).

**This will be an experience you will never forget!**



Maude Foster Mill in Boston

There are limited places available on this tour, so if you are interested ring either Chris Weaire on 782764 or Richie Green on 797165 as soon as possible.

## Spring is sprung!



*The first flowers of our recently planted daffodils are just starting to wave their heads around the mill. Committee member Jen Hay who organised the planting and the Open Gardens last year is in hospital in Hull. Hopefully she will be well and out soon and we all hope that she will be able to admire the results of her work.*

### OPEN GARDENS

Sunday 10th July 2005 1pm - 5pm

Why not invite friends for a walk round as well?

Would you like to share your garden this year?

Weeds are as welcome as Wallflowers!

It's a chance to see our neighbourhood from a different view - and make new friends.

If you would like to donate cakes or raffle prizes for the refreshment garden they would be very welcome.

Tickets £3 each - call Jen Hay on 792638

## SEEN THIS PICTURE?

The picture on the right is a copy of a water colour painting done sometime in the 19th century and shows Holgate Beck with what is now the Fox pub and a view up Acomb Road with the mill in the distance.

We think the original may be in the council's possession, but we don't know where.

If you have seen it and you know where it is please let us know as it may have a date on which will help in our mill researches.



### Holgate Windmill Preservation Society

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Vice-chair: Richard Green

Treasurer: Christine Bramwell

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Registered Charity No. 1096303

Private company registered by guarantee  
No. 5217005

[www.holgatewindmill.org](http://www.holgatewindmill.org)

This newsletter has been produced with funding from:-



# Millnews

Number 7

[www.holgatewindmill.org](http://www.holgatewindmill.org)

## Society welcomes two new patrons!

Following the retirement of the Archbishop of York in February, our society was faced with the task of replacing him as our patron. Those of you who read the last edition of Millnews will recall an article asking for suggestions as to who we could approach to fill this vital position.

We received several names but the one that came from member Geraldine Mathieson seemed an excellent choice. She had contacted Dr Adam Hart-Davis earlier in the year and reported that as well as being an approachable and friendly chap he seemed to be quite interested in windmills and so the society emailed him and got a very positive response. Adam is of course famous for his numerous TV science shows such as 'Local Heros', 'What the Romans did for us' and his current series - 'What the Ancients did for us'. Adam was educated at Eton College and went to Oxford and York Universities and so he knows York quite well.



Flushed with success at getting Adam Hart-Davis we decided to ask Harry Gratton, the TV news presenter to see if he would be interested and again struck lucky! To those of you who regularly watch the local BBC news programme 'Look North', Harry's will be a familiar face. He is of course a local lad having been to St John's College where he trained as a history teacher. Harry lives in York and has already helped our cause by putting us into contact with a colleague at the BBC who intends to film an interview with us at the mill to be put out on 'Look North'. Watch out for this some time in late April or early May.



*Bob Anderton*

## Mill to open for the first time in nearly 70 years!

After getting permission from City of York Council, Holgate Windmill Preservation Society is delighted to be able to invite all our members to a mill open weekend on the 7th and 8th of May this year. The society will be manning the mill from 11am to 4pm on the Saturday and Sunday. There will be displays inside and committee members will be available to explain how machinery would have worked and how flour was ground.

Interested members who wish to attend should be aware that the mill is still unrestored and they will have to wear hard hats during their visit (these will be provided). Also children under the age of 10 will not be allowed access to the upper floors and all children will need to be closely monitored by their parents.

Also it is advisable that anybody who finds difficulty climbing ladders should not attempt going beyond the ground floor.



You can travel from York to Holgate on a No1 bus stopping at West Bank Park or the more energetic can walk or cycle. If driving please do not park in Windmill Rise. There is adequate parking on Acomb Road with easy access to the mill via Windmill Rise or the snicket near the bus stop.

You may bring along non-members if you wish but as the council has restricted us to members only, they will have to join on the day.

We look forward to welcoming you then.



**Holgate  
Windmill**

**PRESERVATION SOCIETY**

*A message from our Chairman . . .*

*After the excitement at gaining planning permission last year there has been a bit of a lull in proceedings for the Society over the Christmas and New Year periods. However that doesn't mean we have slowed our efforts to further our restoration plans for the mill.*

*In December Steve Potts and myself went over to Leeds to meet Fiona Spiers who is manager of Heritage Lottery Fund Yorkshire. She suggested that we apply for a Project Planning Grant to assist us in working up our main application for funds from HLF and other funding organisations. If we are successful the PPG will pay for a Heritage Advisor to help the committee prepare the various plans and documents that we will need and is a vital 'next step' on the road to getting restoration funds.*

*We also welcome our two new patrons and were particularly pleased to meet Adam Hart-Davis in person when he gave a talk on Photography and Science at St John's College in March. (One of his photos below)*



*He has been fascinated by science photography since childhood and explained his various techniques for capturing split second events such as the bursting of a balloon and the dropping of water.*

*Adam was every bit as friendly and enthusiastic as he appears on TV and after the talk he chatted to several members of the society who turned up to hear him.*

*He was due to have a hip replacement operation on the following Monday and we all wish him a complete and speedy recovery.*

*Bob Anderton*

# Windmills open to the public

by *Richie Green - Vice Chairman*

*Unashamedly hoisted from the SPAB Mills Section 'Mills Open 2004' book and reproduced here with their kind permission.*

There were an estimated 4000 windmills in England at their peak in the 18th century. Cities were surrounded by them, as was York. Towns had numerous windmills and every village that was not supported by a watermill had one or two.

Initially they were small open trestle post mills (the wooden supporting framework open to all weathers) later surrounded by a brick wall called a roundhouse which became the standard. They were then enlarged, sometimes hugely as Saxstead Green in Suffolk (raised three times). Tower mills came next, usually made of brick or stone and called smock mills if made from wood.



*Heckington's eight-sailer*

There are 33 post, 27 smock and 75 tower mills. 3 hollow post, 5 open trestle and 2 wind and water mills combined (Doolittle and Little Cressingham) and a few hybrids too.

There are not many multi-sailed (more than four sailed) windmills; three five-sailed, four six-sailed and only one eight-sailed (Heckington). Bourn (1636?), Outwood (1665) and Chesterton ((1632) are our oldest mills with Moulton in Lincolnshire our tallest at 99 feet.

The one with the biggest head, well cap, is Old Buckenham in Norfolk. Stembridge in Somerset is the only thatched windmill, while Bembridge sits all alone on the Isle of Wight. Norfolk has 21 mills, Cambridge 16, Suffolk and Sussex 14 each, Kent 13, Lincolnshire 11 and Essex 10. Mills are being re-opened or being closed for restoration and so these numbers may well change.



*Bembridge Mill*

You will, I am sure, be surprised to learn that there are more than 150 windmills open to the public in Britain as I write, the majority of them in full working order. Sadly there are none working in Scotland, only one in Wales (Melin Llynnon on Anglesey) and one in Northern Ireland (Bally Copeland - the only Roller Reefing Sailed mill in the World).

There are, of course, privately owned windmills, windmills damaged or being restored, or unsafe that are not included here. I hope that this article has given you an insight into the world of windmills in Britain. Hopefully, in the not too distant future, Holgate will become one of the illustrious few 5-sailed windmills open to the public.



*Outwood Mill - built in 1665*

## Millnews - A review

Surprisingly this article is appearing in Millnews No.7. Issued every six months, it gives a timely reminder of 'how long it has taken us to get where we are'. Hence the following review.

Millnews is a very nice way for the HWPS to express its views and communicate to our members. It enables us to describe the work in hand and the ever-changing situation and status of the mill. Initially a single sheet of A4 and in black and white, it is now normally four pages and in glossy full colour. It is indeed matching the growth of HWPS. Here are some of the contents up to issue No.6

*Millnews article headings -*

*"A Positive Start", Continued Growth and Support" and "Fundraising Fun" by our founder Christine Bramwell. "Residents form Preservation Society", Visit to SPAB", "Membership and Charitable Status" and "Society becomes a Limited Company" by Brian Lambert. "A Windmill Unique in England", "York Windmills", "The Life and Times of Holgate Windmill", and "Milling about in Norfolk" by Richie Green. "Heritage Lottery Fund", "Structural Inspection/Progress", "Millwright's Report", "The Shape of Things to Come" and "Planning Approval" by Stephen Potts. "Awarded over £21,000" (Bob acquired this funding virtually on his own)"A visit*

*to Heage", "A Grand Day Out", and "What happened to Our Sack Hoist" by Bob Anderton.*

Other articles by Chris Weaire, Paul Hepworth, Mark Houlton and Helen Daniels add spice and variety.

Our original chairman - Robert Hall managed to encapsulate all our collective enthusiasm in his well written "Message from our Chairman". This has been retained by Bob Anderton, the present chairman, who designs and produces Millnews with flair and imagination and deserves much of the credit for its success.

*Richie Green*

# How Holgate Windmill helped the war effort

*Edited by Chris Weaire, Archivist*

Recently Brian, our secretary, received a letter from a John Brooks, now living in Leeds, who was brought up in Murray Street and eventually lived in Windmill Rise. He is happy for us to print extracts from his account of his childhood memories in 'Millnews'

I am the second of four (sadly, now only three), brothers born between October 1925 and February 1930, in the Holgate Nursing Home just at the top of Holgate Hill. We lived in Murray Street, only a short walk from Holgate Windmill, and I can remember my mother and father commenting upon the noises sometimes made, when the miller decided to make the best use of it by working during the night, in favourable wind conditions.

As I got that little bit older, I and my elder brother and several other lads from the local area used to spend quite a lot of time in the area around the mill, because by then it was derelict, but locked up, and the mill house had disappeared. By that time the housing estate, Grantham Drive, St Swithin's Walk and Windmill Rise was being built, although there was still a lot of vacant land along Windmill Rise as war was declared towards the end of 1939.

At the outbreak of war there was a concerted effort to gather any available iron and steel to melt down and remake into much needed munitions. Murray and Lindley Street houses, all had fancy cast iron railings along the front walls bordering the street, but it wasn't long before most of them were taken to help make munitions.

Which brings me to the point of my story. By early 1940 I had become a teenager, as were most of our friends; and of course we still spent a lot of our time together, either on Hob Moor, or in West Bank (but it wasn't a park at that time) or in the area around the mill. In fact it wasn't difficult to get into the mill and provided we kept reasonably quiet, no one knew we were there. We also used to spend hours in the large chestnut tree, close by the northern side of the road, or on our bicycles, riding and racing round the mill. The road around the mill had of course been built, but it was little used by anyone else except the local constable(PC Bell, if I recall correctly) on his bicycle.

I recollect that a part of the mill's steel sheeted roof was capable of being removed, and so it was by us, sometimes, so that we could enjoy the rather longer, distant views. But my recollection is also, that climbing to the top was a bit hairy; a lot of the steps in the wooden stair-ladders were missing. But one or two of the local girls knew the way to the top as well!!!

Talking to my elder brother recently about this story, the basics of which he vaguely recalls, he reminded me that there were attempts to climb down the main timber of the sail which pointed towards the ground. It was never achieved so far as I know, the handholds and footholds were too flimsy and the ground always too far away.

Because we used to spend time in the mill, it wasn't too long before one of our number (not I) realised how much cast iron and steel, in the shape of cog-wheels or lengths of metal bars, shafts and joists



*View taken from the top of the mill looking down Windmill Rise to Grantham Drive at around the time when John Brooks was a boy.*

etc. were just laid there - doing nothing. And why shouldn't it be put to better use???

It certainly wasn't a case of carrying it anywhere, it was far too heavy and there was enough of it for us to think of some form of transport, - but what? Then we all traipsed off to see the 'local' scrap metal dealer. That meant going to just the other side of the Holgate railway bridge to Oxford Street or Cambridge Street. He was asked if he would allow us to use one of his hand-carts and doubtless with some promise of profit, he was only too willing.

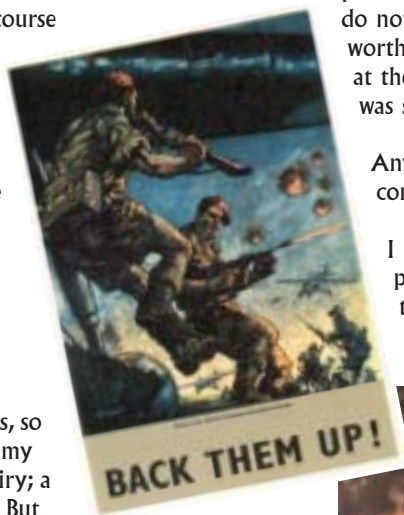
The journey back to the mill was hilarious, with one or two trying to ride and the others making best effort to control the handcart, especially down Holgate Hill! When we got back to the farm track up to the mill

from Acomb Road (opposite where New Lane is now) we began to realise what we had taken on. The task of loading up the hand-cart presented some difficulties because all the bits and pieces needed to be passed through the 'window', but it wasn't long before we had a sufficient load. Then the journey back towards 'town' was not so easy because of the steepness of Holgate Hill.

Quite honestly I don't remember anything of the transactions with the scrap metal man, and I don't remember any of the cash aspects, but we did make a second journey straight away! As to what sort of 'profit' any of us made from this escapade, I honestly do not remember. We occasionally bought a penny-worth of chips from "Lucy's", the fish and chip shop at the beginning of Park Lane. Probably our 'profit' was spent like that!

Anyhow that's how 'the mill' as we knew it, contributed to the war effort.

I have to say, that after all these years, I am pleased that there is now a determined effort on the part of the preservation society, to see that the mill is to be restored to its former appearance.



*Did bits of our mill go into making one of these?*