

send us happily but thoughtfully on our way. Tom is charming and indefatigable with a dry wit.

Geoff Dees, the miller at Alford delighted in showing off his mill to us and his delight turned into ours. A nicely proportioned and well built mill, surrounded by a tea-room, shop, antique sales, a huge car park and views over the Wolds. The last of three mills in Alford all with different numbers of sails, four, five and six.

A difficult find in a maze of lovely roads, Jan helping me out with directions, led us over a tiny bridge to Alvingham Watermill. We were welcomed by the owner Phil Davis and although no longer open to the public, it remains in working condition having been relieved of a huge tonnage of silt and mud by energetic volunteers. A pretty post mill used to stand in the nearby field. The mill suffers from its location but was well worth the visit, aesthetically pleasing and a final team photograph to end the tour.

As we approached York experienced a terrific deluge accompanied by thunder and lightening. Startling, but a welcome change from the sultry weather.

Val Inwood, our contact at City of York Council joined us on our tour in a fact-finding mission. Val has been really supportive in our efforts to restore the mill and was even more enthusiastic about mills at the end of the tour. However it can't have escaped her notice that many of the mills were financially supported by their local councils, an arrangement that, so far, has not been available to Holgate Windmill. With Val's help and support perhaps this might change!

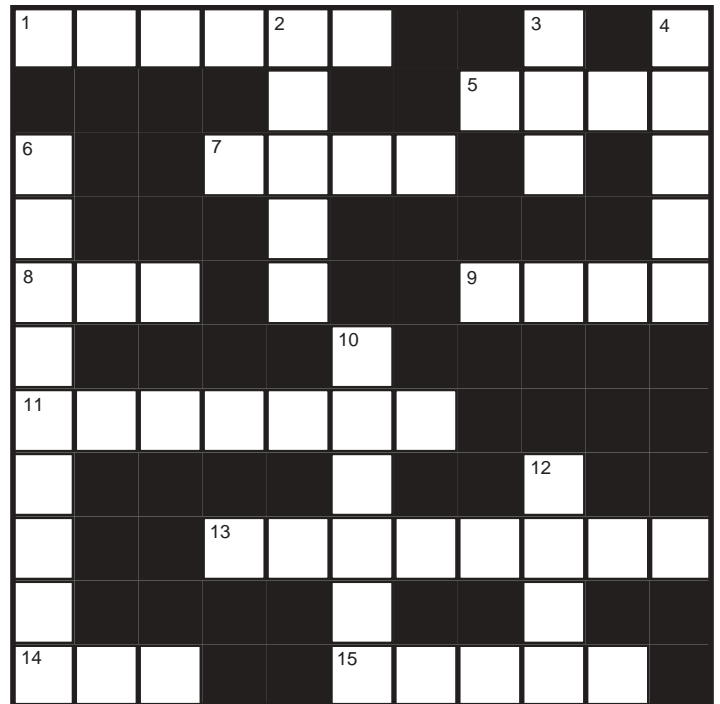
Lastly I would like to thank all those who encouraged me to "do the tour" and of course the millers and millwright. The tourists were happy, good company and uncomplaining in the hot conditions. Thank you one and all!

Richie Green



The idyllic Alvingham Watermill

Crosswind



CLUES

Across

- 1&7 Holgate Windmill's first Miller (6,4)
 5 See 3 Down
 7 See 1 Across
 8 The hat that tops it all off (3)
 9 You must put the stone nuts into ____ before grinding starts
 11&13 Its our pride and joy (7,8)
 13 See 11 Across
 14 The mill is painted with this (3)
 15 There's five of these (5)

Down

- 2 The raw ingredient (5)
 3D & 5A Keeps the sails to the wind (3,4)
 4 The finished product (5)
 6 Makes life easier lifting those heavy bags (4,5)
 10 See 12 Down
 12&10 They grind you down (4,6)

Mark Houtt

"OPEN GARDENS" - The hottest day of the Year? . . . It may have been but those who braved the heat enjoyed the delights of ten varied styles of gardening and were revived with home-made cakes and buns! New members joined the group, new friends made, plants were bought and a good afternoon in the sun enjoyed by all.

Jen Hay

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Holgate Windmill on the box!

Due to the good offices of one of our patrons - Harry Gratton - Holgate Windmill was featured on the BBC TV early evening 'Look North' news programme. A reporter from the programme was dispatched to record the item and had Helen Daniels and Bob Anderton as the new stars of the small screen!

Bob says "I was expecting a film crew with lights, sound man, catering facilities and those little chairs with names on that you get on all the film locations, but no such luck. One chap with a camera did the lot."

In all about 15 minutes of material was recorded and this was edited down to about a 4 minute item.

This was of course wonderful publicity for our cause and put the mill into countless numbers of homes throughout Yorkshire.

Helen's says " It was a bit daunting at first knowing that what we were saying would go out to possibly millions of people but the chap recording us made it feel very natural and I soon got used to the interview."

Another first for Holgate Windmill.

A message from our Chairman . . .

Millnews number 8 can report another active spring and summer season for the society with a splendid Open Weekend in May. This was attended by many local people who were keen to see the inside of a building which some had lived with all their lives without ever getting the opportunity to explore. At one point on the Sunday afternoon we had about 30 people queuing around the mill waiting to get a hard hat as our stock was fully used up. Some people even went home and brought their own to avoid waiting! It was great to see so many youngsters enjoying the experience. The society has decided to hold another open day on the 18th September. Please come along and explore again.

The HWPS stall was on display at two local summer fayres - West Bank Park and Batchelor Hill and this year our Open Gardens event was held on one of the sunniest afternoons of the year.

However it has not been all plain sailing as our first application to Heritage Lottery Fund has been met with a negative response. After a site visit by a senior grant officer the society was informed that our application for funds could not be considered until we had a separate educational facility to offer to visiting schools. They also felt that the amount of money being requested could not be justified by the possible visitor numbers that the mill would attract. They did however suggest that a bid for a smaller sum and an indication of some form of education facility might be met with more success.

This is disappointing as it means considering a much smaller restoration scheme without putting back the sails or fantail. We will need to look closely at this and decide whether there are other funds that we can apply for to make up the difference.

On a lighter note, if you turn to our back page you will notice our first Millnews crossword compiled by committee member Mark Hoult. Will this be a feature for future editions? Mark's partner Helen tells us that after finishing it he had to lie down in a darkened pub for several hours to recover, so we will have to see!

Bob Anderton

The Language of Windmills

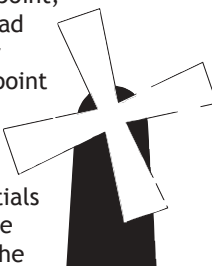
By Helen Daniels

In the olden days, when windmills played an important part in local communities, they could be seen from a long way away. This made them very useful as a way of conveying information to people by setting the sails in different positions, a bit like semaphore flag signals. They could be used to mark joyful, sorrowful and important occasions or to summon the workers to the mill. They were even used in Holland during the war to give advance warning of enemy approaches.

Below is a beginner's guide to the language of the windmill. Unfortunately, most of these signals apply to 4 sailed windmills so we wouldn't be able to apply these to Holgate Windmill, with its 5 sails. Perhaps we need to invent our own sail language to convey messages to the people of York!

Celebrations

When the sails were stopped just before they reached their highest point, this meant a happy event had occurred, such as a birth or marriage. The sails at this point are described as "coming". (Sometimes, the mills were decorated to celebrate these occasions and the initials of the bride and groom were displayed in the centre of the sails.)



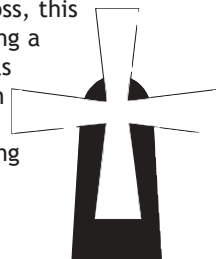
Mourning

When the sails were stopped just beyond their highest point, this meant that somebody had died and that the miller was in mourning. The sails at this point are described as "going".



Rests

When the sails were left in the shape of a horizontal and vertical cross, this meant the miller was taking a short break. When the sails stopped in the shape of an "X" shaped cross, this meant the miller was taking a longer break.



And lastly.....Folklore

Mills were believed to have healing properties. In Ireland, if a miller dipped a child with whooping cough three times in the hopper of a mill while it was turning, the illness would be cured. If the miller came from a third generation of practising millers, it would be even more effective.



Happy Interpreting!!

Further adventures in windmill country

South Lincolnshire Tour 18/19th June 2005

"A Grand Day Out" it was called in Bob Anderton's article in Millnews No4 describing the first HWPS factfinding tour of North Lincolnshire in September 2003. We visited Skidby, the only working windmill in Yorkshire, and now with a café. Then the most northern post mill at Wrawby, sadly has since lost two of its sails. Ellis Windmill surrounded by houses and the huge Waltham Windmill followed. A wonderful day indeed and much was learnt by all especially when a copy of "The running of Ellis Windmill", a practical guide was passed around.

Not for nothing did Bennett and Elton write: "It requires nearly as much courage to handle a large windmill as to handle a ship". Well, ours is a small windmill!

The Tour: Some mills stand out and must be seen, The Maud Foster at Boston, Heckington and Alford. Moulton, Sibsey and Borough-le-Marsh all slipped neatly into the tour but what about Mount Pleasant, North Leverton, Heapham, Whissendine and others, perhaps another time. To add to the flavour I included two watermills to start and finish the tour at Cogglesford and Alvingham.

Acquiring a minibus was out of my capabilities (Ascot at York!) but Rosemary Anderton suggested Adrian Rodaway might be able to help and he put us on to Mrs Garbutt of Huntington Methodist Church who



the 'tourists'

came to our rescue, for which we are very grateful. Sadly due to a massive amount of A-level marking Rosemary could not come on the tour.

We set off on a warm day eventually arriving nearly an hour late at Cogglesford. It is a lovely watermill run by Kesteven District Council, fully working, with a long and fascinating history. The millers described their constant battles with pests, but their enthusiasm for milling and the mill was there for all to see.

Quickly, too quickly, into the minibus (Betsy) for the one minute drive to the Waggon and Horses pub for lunch. A surprise birthday cake for Helen and she and Mark touched me and touché me with a wonderful T-shirt decorated with numerous pictures of Holgate Windmill on the front. I was lost for words. I will treasure it.

The day was now scorching hot but off to Heckington, the only eight-sailed mill in western Europe. As we approached we were "tickled pink" to see a written sign welcoming us outside the mill. Our first team photograph ensued. Martin Hanson greeted us and we watched a video about the mill and its controversial repair. The sub-curb on top of the brickwork tower is now a modern piece of metalwork using technology to replace the original but flawed woodwork. This repair was sanctioned by English Heritage! There does seem to be some inconsistency if not incorrectness here, but this system may well be used at Holgate!

And so to the much publicised and extensively and expensively repaired and restored Moulton Windmill. All of us were eager to see the latest thinking behind its reconstruction. Over £1 million has been spent on this windmill but we found it incomplete, not working and rather soulless; but this is harsh criticism for such early days. Why restore Moulton? Its in the middle of nowhere, has a population catchment area of not a lot, so how will it survive in the long term, magnificent though it will surely be; ill conceived? Only time will tell.



Cogglesford Watermill



Moulton Windmill



Stones grind



The sails photographed from the gallery at Maud Foster Mill in Boston

Down the long and winding road (title of a song?) to the Maud Foster Mill at Boston, so named after the "drain" or canal in front of it. Privately owned by James Waterfield who welcomed us with a wide smile and ushered us into the tea-room for refreshments. The mill is huge and handsome and fully working, grinding organic flour for a living. Assisted by Robert, James runs the mill commercially and successfully and reminds me of Tennyson: "Who that knew him would forget the busy wrinkle round his eyes? The slow, wise smile that round his dusty forehead dryly curled, seemed half within and half without and full of dealings with the world".

Helen asked me, by way of confirmation, how the Patent Sails worked and a few minutes later she was operating them via the weighted chain, much to the delight of herself and Mark. This was a mill that was a joy to be in, flour dust everywhere, tools for minor adjustments at hand and bags full of grist and flour filling the meal floor. This mill is content.

An overnight stop at the "Ship Inn" Boston, quirky rooms but OK especially for tired tourists in need of freshening up. A quick pint and then off to "Wetherspoons" for a meal and good company. Some of the party visited the Boston Stump at 272 feet tall. Back to the Ship and later Richie and Paul having discussions with the landlord at 0130hours about the disco and the distant sounds of thunder (Bob's Snoring!). Such is life.

Day 2: Approaching Sibsey Windmill it is easy to see why so many liked the look of it, a fine mill with a wonderful scrolled ironwork stage. Maggie decided to have a closer look at the scroll work and took me by the hand onto the stage. So now I know what stage fright is! My back hard against the battered wall - penguin along it looking straight ahead, Maggie laughing her head off, gazelling in front of me. Vertigo can be quite funny, no, really.

Ian Ansell showed us round discussing various past and present difficulties but he is stoical and will prevail. In 1970 F Evison cut out and



ing at Maud Foster

replaced 6000 bricks on this mill and the finish is excellent. This type of effort will be needed on Holgate Windmill.

Lunch at Burgh-le-Marsh under an awning especially erected for us on this beautiful day. The mill is



Sibsey Windmill

unusual in being left-handed (clockwise turning sails when seen from the front), and the only one in Lincolnshire. My wife Maggie told me she could smell burning/overheating in the mill. The miller John Clarke and myself rushed upstairs to find that some idiot had engaged a pair of stones running without grain. An unknown member of the public I might add! Vigilance the key lesson here.

Next to Thompson's Yard, the only millwrights founded in the 19th century still working in the country. Tom Davis, arguably the best millwright working today showed us around and had infinite patience with our infinite questions. A few stories to make us laugh, cry, despair and giggle but all with underlying messages to



A tiny corner of Tom Davis' workshop crammed with tools, patterns and mill bits.