TIMS E-NEWS

The International Molinological Society

Spring/ Summer 2026 Issue 40

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Intro

President's Message

This year, TIMS is organising a Mid-Term Excursion to Flanders. You may have already seen the programme during the Zoom meeting, where Eddy De Saedeleer introduced the mills we will be visiting. We will see a variety of working windmills and watermills, as well as working horse mills. The-first registrations have already arrived, so sign up quickly!

This E-News is the first E-News where Holly Parton has collected and edited all the information. Leo van der Drift did this for many years but has now passed the baton to Holly. Leo has meticulously crafted excellent content for our E-News. New books were discussed, as well as a good overview of open mill days and other activities. He also paid close attention to special topics and provided opportunities for members to share their mill news with us. The E-News is sent out to over 1,200 people. Leo, on behalf of all these people, thank you so much for this achievement. We hope you continue your commitment to TIMS, and we're confident we'll see you again somewhere. Indeed, we'll see you again in this President's message in a few paragraphs!

This issue of E-News again features a wealth of news from around the world. First up is Gerald Bost's summary of the 60th anniversary of TIMS. Gerald held a well-attended Zoom meeting celebrating this occasion. Once again, the agenda details events such as national mill days and the SPAB events/courses. We also find more information about the Belgian Mid-Term Excursion in September in Flanders, a conference in Portugal and a mill restoration project in Spain. Then there is a variety of world news. From Italy, we hear of digital projects making heritage more accessible, plus a film about local communities in southern Italy maintaining watermills and the landscape. Then there's Bill Cleveland's and Willem van Bergen's journey to St. Croix exploring sugar mills — many beautiful photos. There are a number of restoration projects/plans, including: information from the UK featuring updates on an oat mill in Wales and the completion of the windmill in Heage, Derbyshire. From Poland we received an introduction to a family mill with restoration plans. Our member Andy Selfe is very active in South Africa. He sent in a detailed article on the restoration of a watermill. Finally there is an article from the US, featuring ideas for windmill restoration plans. And of course, Leo van der Drift's Book Corner, news about tide mills, and other general mill videos.
We hope you like the content and please share with us your thoughts and ideas.

The association is pleased to announce that we welcomed 50 new members last year. Our active approach, as well as our strong profile through effective Zoom meetings, contributed to this. We also welcomed ten new members in the first two months of 2026. If you know of anyone who would like to join TIMS please let us know; or just send them to our website, where there is a lot to be seen. For example, the Database on

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international mills; every day there are updates, so please have a look. Only today Leo van der Drift informed me that he received 1,250 pictures from Greece and France.

We are still looking for new topics for the Zoom meetings. If you have a topic in mind or would like to present one yourself, please let me know.

And finally: in 2027 we will have our next symposium, this time in Poland. Our Polish team, led by Marcin Stefaniak, has put together a wonderful programme, including traditional elements such as guided tours of mills and paper sessions. Folklore and culture are also on the agenda. For the symposium to be a success, it's important that we receive enough papers. If you are participating, please consider contributing by submitting a paper.

I wish you a wonderful year in molinology.
Ton Meesters

Not a member of TIMS yet? Well, it is easy to enroll, just complete the online application form.....
Enjoy reading E-News !!

60 Years of TIMS – A Global Community for Mill Research

by Gerald Bost.

For six decades, **The International Molinological Society (TIMS)** has been dedicated to the study and preservation of mills worldwide. Founded in 1965, TIMS remains the only international organisation devoted exclusively to the science and culture of mills — from historic wind and water mills to modern engineering structures.

Delegates of the first Symposium in 1965 in Portugal

Today, TIMS unites almost 400 members from around 30 countries, including engineers, historians, conservators, and enthusiasts of milling heritage The society's mission is to promote research, preserve knowledge, and highlight the cultural and technological significance of mills across generations.

"Mills are far more than mechanical constructions," says **Gerald Bost,** member of the TIMS Board. "They tell stories of people, work, technology, and human ingenuity — across centuries."

TIMS offers several key platforms for exchange and knowledge sharing:
the journal *International Molinology* (published twice a year),
the *Bibliotheca Molinologica* book series,
the *TIMS E-News* online newsletter.
Every four years, the society hosts an **International Symposium**, most recently in Porto (Portugal) in 2023. The next symposium will take place in Poland in 2027. In addition, **Mill Tours** in various European countries — such as Sweden, Latvia, and the Czech Republic — combine expert

learning with cultural experience.

Delegates of the 15th Symposium in 2019 in Berlin (photo by Andre Koopal)

Looking ahead, TIMS aims to engage younger audiences and strengthen its digital presence through online platforms and social media. "Our goal is to translate the fascination with mills into the language of today," emphasizes Bost.

For 60 years, TIMS has stood for an active, international community that connects research, history, and passion — keeping the heritage of mills alive for future generations.

Our recording from the 60th Anniversary ZOOM-meeting is on YouTube:
https://youtu.be/vJOZ90yD9mc
More information: www.molinology.org

AGENDA

National and Regional Heritage, Monument and Mill Days

Editor's Note
At the time of writing, most National Mill Days are in preparation. **For the latest information it is important to check the websites before travelling anywhere.**

During the European Heritage Days in September, a lot of mills are open to the public as well. The programs for this event are not yet available. Always make sure to check details before you go!
European Heritage Days | European Heritage Days
About | European Heritage Days

Belgium (Flanders): https://www.molenforumvlaanderen.be/
Sunday 26th April - National Mill Day and National Heritage Day
Sunday 13th September - National Monuments Day
Sunday 18th October - Mills Open Day East- and West Flanders

Czech Republic: www.vodnimlyny.cz and www.povetrnik.cz
Saturday 9th May – National Open Mill Day

Denmark: https://danskmoellerforening.dk/dansk-moelledag/
Sunday 21st June – National Mill Day

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France: Home - Journées européennes des Moulins et du Patrimoine Meulier
Saturday 16th & Sunday 17th May - European Mill and Millstone Heritage Days
Friday 26th, Saturday 27th, Sunday 28th June - Journées du Patrimoine de Pays & des Moulins https://www.moulinsdefrance.org and https://www.patrimoinedepays-moulins.org/
Saturday 19th & Sunday 20th September - European Heritage Days

Germany: https://www.deutsche-muehlen.de/deutscher-muehlentag/
Monday 25th May (Whitsun Monday) - National Mill Day
Over 1,000 wind- and watermills are open to the public. An index of all mills that participate will be published on the internet site of DGM.

Italy: https://www.aiams.eu/
Saturday 16th & Sunday 17th May - (European Mill Days),

Netherlands: Molendagen | De Hollandsche Molen (molens.nl)
Saturday 9th & Sunday 10th May - National Mill Days

Portugal: https://www.moinhosdeportugal.org/ws/
Tuesday 7th April – National Open Mills Day
Saturday 11th & Sunday 12th April – Mills Open Weekend

This year the RPM – Rede Portuguesa de Moinhos (Portugese Mills Network) is introducing a new digital tool designed to amplify the visibility and impact of the Open Mills Day initiative: the new Network App. Through the App, users can access the complete programme of Open Mills Day, including detailed information on all participating mills, scheduled activities, and precise geolocation for easy navigation. The platform enhances public engagement, facilitates visits, and strengthens communication across the network.
The App is free of charge and operates year-round as RPM's central communication channel with its members, partners and followers.
To become a member and join the App, simply use the following link:
https://rede-portuguesa-de-moinhos.mn.co/

Sweden: https://www.hembygd.se/foreningen-skanska-mollor/
Sunday 5th July, Skåne, - "Möllornas Dag", Regional Mill Day
At the time of writing the date was not yet published on the website, and so should be checked beforehand.

Switzerland: Schweizer Mühlentag - Mühlenfreunde (muehlenfreunde.ch)
Saturday 16th May (Saturday after Ascension Day) - National Mill Day

UK: https://www.spab.org.uk/mills/national-mills-weekend-0
Saturday 9th & Sunday 10th May – National Mill Days
The National Mills Weekend takes place across the UK every May. More than 300 windmills and watermills will usually be open to the public to celebrate our milling heritage. For more information, please consult the website.

TIMS 2026 MID-TERM BELGIUM

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Mid-term Belgium

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September 2026 is the perfect time to visit various types of mills in Belgium. The proposed region of Flanders includes both provinces of the historic County of Flanders, now divided into West Flanders and East Flanders, as well as the Campine region in the provinces of Antwerp and Flemish Brabant, furthermore, the province of Hainaut and part of French Flanders, in the North of France.

Regarding the mills, we will visit 35 corn mills, two of which can be operated by both wind and electricity. We will also see four oil mills and five combined corn and oil mills. Additionally, there will be a flax mill, a paper mill, a farm distillery, and a butter churn once powered by a dog.

Post mills, with two or three floors, with open trestles or built on round-houses. Two working 50% scale models. Traditional Flemish three-piece wooden stocks, or Van Bussel type stocks. A noteworthy example includes a post mill with numerous panniers (combuse). You'll also encounter stone smock mills either on mounds or ground-sailed, some featuring a reefing stage. Famous collar caps.

The watermills include both those with and without a filling pond. Some watermills produce electricity, with one dating back to World War I. Other mills feature a gear wheel pit, while some have a more authentic pair of adjacent stones. There are watermills for grinding corn, as well as mills equipped with edge runner stones for oil production. Additionally, there are shade trees (tilia) planted to protect the waterwheels from rain, wind, and sun. One of the highlights is a working tide mill near the River Scheldt.

Some watermills have been adapted to include roller mills, and the tour will conclude with a fully restored paper-making watermill.

Along with these wind- and watermills, the tour will also visit a farm jenever distillery and a few operational horse mills, where horses are still used to power the mills (for grinding corn and producing oil). Several sites feature small museums that explain the history of milling. You might even get the chance to try the unique "windmill beaker." In the watermill

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area, there is also a statue of the miller, a profession that is now recognized in Flanders as part of its intangible cultural heritage.

More info on www.flandersmills.be or www.molinology.org

Date: 5 September until 13 September, arrival day and departure days included.

Tour organizer Flanders Mills vzw for TIMS

Eddy De Saedeleer info@flandersmills.be

WORLD NEWS

PORTUGAL

Editor's Note: The following information about a day conference on renewable energy in Portugal, was sent in to E-News by Professor Helena Ramos. It includes two projects involving watermill complexes. The text is in Portugese, but a link to the website is given below, where information in English is also available. It looks an interesting programme and well worth attending for those who were able to go.

Developing Hybrid Systems for Renewable Energy in Energy Communities: Strengthening Local Energy Resilience

Open Day: Hybrid Energy Systems in Energy Communities - HY4RES

You can check the programme here

SPAIN

MolinoKwon Project
By Cristina Martinez

In the heart of a privileged natural setting, alongside the Serpis River, a jewel of Valencian industrial heritage is being brought back to life. **The MolinoKwon Project** is leading the restoration of a magnificent watermill built in 1818, with the aim of transforming it into a Center for the Interpretation of the Industrial Heritage of the Serpis River and a tourist information point dedicated to hydraulic heritage. Yet its vision goes even further: it seeks to become a true "*Factory of Art, Culture, and Movement*" – a vibrant space devoted to sport, artistic creation, cultural activity, and community engagement.

This is an exemplary initiative with a clear international dimension, combining heritage preservation, cultural innovation, and social revitalisation.

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A Building with History

For more than two centuries, the mill has witnessed the economic and social transformations of the region. It was originally built as a flour mill; over time, it became an electricity factory for the town, later a cardboard factory powered by hydraulic energy, and more recently, part of the building was used for marble production. Eventually, the structure was abandoned.

Fig. 1. The Millrace

Fig. 2 Mill water channel

Fig. 3 The Cardboard Factory

Today, this architectural and industrial landmark awaits a new opportunity to reclaim its relevance and assume a contemporary role aligned with its historical legacy.

A Strategic Location: Heritage and Nature

The mill stands at the beginning of the "the Greenway of the Light Factories," a scenic route that follows the path of a former industrial railway line that once ran parallel to the Serpis River. Within this landscape of remarkable natural beauty, visitors can still find dams, irrigation channels, canals and abandoned factories that historically played a crucial role in water management.

The route is highly popular among hikers and cyclists, yet its' cultural and historical value has not been fully developed. The MolinoKwon Project aims to enhance and reinterpret this heritage, giving it renewed meaning for contemporary audiences.

The mill is located in Villalonga, in the Valencian Community – a region with strong international appeal and renowned for its exceptional climate. The constant presence of visitors and residents from across Europe and beyond reinforces the project's global outlook.

An International Scope

The region's international character presents a unique opportunity to connect the mill to broader networks focused on industrial heritage, hydraulic architecture, sustainability, and cultural innovation.

MolinoKwon does not merely seek to restore a building; it aims to integrate it into a global conversation about the adaptive reuse of

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industrial heritage as a driver of cultural, educational, and economic development.

Figs. 4 & 5 Exterior and canal renderings showing how the rehabilitation will look

Fig. 6 Rendering of how the internal restoration will look

Ways to be Part of the Project

The project team is currently developing various funding strategies and remains in close dialogue with the Town Council of Villalonga, which strongly supports the initiative due to its' social, cultural, sporting, and tourism impact. Future plans for the center include a gym and multipurpose rooms for educational and community activities.

However, participation in the MolinoKwon Project goes far beyond financial contributions. We are seeking individuals and institutions with a genuine passion for industrial heritage — people who see in this initiative an opportunity to shape something constructive and meaningful, bringing new relevance to these magnificent historic structures.

Possible forms of collaboration include:

- International dissemination and promotion of the project
- Academic research, study, and institutional endorsement
- Facilitating local and international contacts interested in becoming involved
- Recommendations and introductions to potential sponsors
- Support in liaising with public institutions and identifying grants and funding opportunities
- Connecting the project with compatible business initiatives
- Direct participation in the conceptual and strategic development of the project, contributing ideas, proposals, and reference examples

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A Project for the Future

The MolinoKwon Project represents a firm commitment to reclaiming heritage as a space for life, creativity, and community. Where industrial production once took place, the goal now is to generate culture, movement, and shared experience.

More information:
www.elmolinokwon.es
The Kwon Mill English Home
Presentation video (with subtitles): The MolinoKwon Project: Factory of Art, Culture and Movement - YouTube

Credit for all the images: the MolinoKwon Project; they can be used freely.

The mill is beating again – and its new energy comes from the collective will to preserve the past in order to build the future.

UK

SPAB Mills Section Events for 2026

National Mills Weekend

The National Mills Weekend is an annual celebration promoted by the Mills Section of SPAB. Across the country, hundreds of mills – including some not normally open to the public – will be taking part. The next National Mills Weekend will take place on Saturday 9th & Sunday 10th May 2026.
More Information
https://www.spab.org.uk/mills/national-mills-weekend-0

Image credit: Bridge Mill, Bridgerule, Devon 2017 by Martin Watts

Caring for their Future: Recording, Repairing, & Researching Mills

Saturday 13 June 2026, 10am – 4.15pm
Watlington Hall, 44 Watlington Street, Reading RG1 4RJ
The in-person conference will focus on the maintenance, repair and monitoring of mills and how to create, preserve and display documents.

Mildred Cookson and Nathanael Hodge from the Mills Archive Trust, will share their knowledge on caring for documents and images. Dr Toby Huitson and Duncan McCallum will explore the Mills at Risk theme and the intricacies of listing historic buildings. Dr. Michael Nevell will present the Industrial Heritage Support Project. We will also hear from

Millwright, Paul Sellwood about the maintenance and repair of mills and Stephen Bartlett about flood warning and prevention for watermills.

A detailed programme will be published shortly.
Book here
https://www.spab.org.uk/whats-on/caring-their-future-recording-repairing-researching-mills

Image credit: Brampton Mill, by James Innerdale

Mill Workshops/Experience for the Younger Mill Enthusiast - A Call for Information/Help

The Editor

One of our members asked if there are any workshops or camps relating to mills, where young people can learn about milling and mill heritage. Her son loves mills and would like to take part in something if possible. She is particularly interested in workshops or projects in countries where he could practice both his English and German.

Our President Ton Meesters put her in touch with Radu Trifan from Romania, where groups of enthusiasts are working to restore mills. But we are also putting this call out for any information about workshops/ projects/volunteering with mills that our fellow mill experts and enthusiasts might know of.

If you can help please email Ton Meesters – ton.meesters6@gmail.com

ITALY

Editor's Note: We have two news items from Italy, sent in by Dr Maria Grano, a research fellow at The Institute of Heritage Science of the National Research Council of Italy. The first is submitted on behalf of the Italian Association of Friends of Historic Mills (AIAMS) and concerns the completion of a digital transition project. The second presents a small film project on water, people, and historic mills in Southern Italy, which Maria completed last summer.

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1)The Digital Future of Historic Mills: From Italy to an International Community

The Italian Association of Friends of Historic Mills (AIAMS) has successfully completed its digital transition project, aimed at strengthening the promotion and accessibility of its cultural heritage.

The initiative was funded by the European Union – Next Generation EU under Italy's National Recovery and Resilience Plan (PNRR), supporting digital innovation in the cultural sector. Through this project, AIAMS continues to connect historic mill heritage with contemporary digital tools and wider audiences.

New digital tools, a renewed website, active social media channels, and the creation of the AIAMS Library represent an important step towards building a stronger and more connected international network of historic mills.

Digital innovation is becoming a key driver to link local heritage, communities, and knowledge across borders. **Through dialogue and cooperation historic mills can grow together.**

Website: https://aiams.eu/

Natante floating mill near Mantova (Revere) plus books from the AIAMS library

2) A Short Film about People, Water, and Mills in Southern Italy

The Community of Water is a short documentary produced by the Italian National Research Council – Institute of Heritage Sciences (CNR-ISPC) and recently shortlisted among the four finalists of the Faro Film Festival.

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Images 2, 3, 4 - Faro Film Festival

The film focuses on local communities in Southern Italy that have been caring for water, historic watermills, rural landscapes, and traditional knowledge for generations. Through everyday practices and simple stories, it shows how water has shaped work, food production, and community life—and why these places still matter today.

In particular, the documentary presents several communities in the Basilicata region, in the Province of Potenza (PZ), that are actively working to preserve the memory of historic mills and traditional water management practices.

One example is the Mulino Romano in **San Martino d'Agri (PZ)**, which has been reconstructed and can currently operate for cultural and touristic demonstrations. This is a double mill, featuring both a fulling and grinding mechanism. At present, it is powered by electricity due to limited water availability and the absence of an active water concession.

Images 5, 6, 7, 8- Mulino Romano in San Martino d'Agri

Another case is **Picerno (PZ)**, where a historic fulling mill (gualchiera) used for wool processing has been reconstructed at scale. The local community is working towards a full reconstruction; in the meantime, a virtual museum is being developed, including the physical model and a 3D video illustrating the original working process.

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Images 9, 10, 11 - Model of Gualchiera Fulling Mill

A third example is **Tito (PZ)**, where a mill is very well preserved but not operating. It is privately owned and used as a country house, and it is open to the public only during the annual Mill Days in May. This site is particularly interesting because local gardeners (ortolani) still divert water from the Noce River into the historic canal system to irrigate the terraced gardens below, keeping traditional water management practices alive.

(Man and a young boy) restoring the intake structure and water channel for the flour and fulling mills in Tito, now used solely for irrigation, as the restored mills are not yet operational.

Rather than presenting mills as isolated monuments, the documentary frames them as part of living cultural landscapes, deeply connected to farming, pastoral activities, and shared memories. This recognition highlights the value of community-led heritage and reminds us that the future of watermills depends on the people who continue to care for them.

Source: CNR – National Research Council of Italy

https://www.cnr.it/it/news/14048/la-comunita-dell-acqua-cortometraggio-del-cnr-ispc-arrivato-tra-i-quattro-finalisti-al-faro-film-festival

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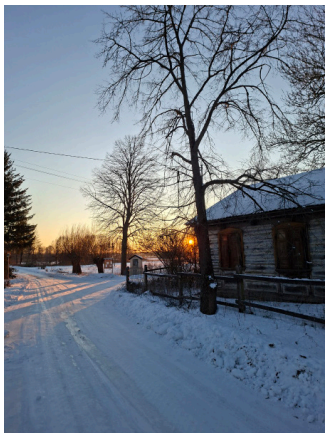
POLAND

An Introduction to the Raczko Family Watermill
by Jan Raczko

General sight of Osińskie hamlet

Name: Osińskie Watermill
Owners: Raczko family
Established: Circa. 1911
Founders: Kazimierz & Klara Raczko
Propulsion: 1st – undershot wheel. 2nd – Francis turbine
River: Kostrzyń (Vistula river basin)
Locality (village): Dobrzanów
Community: Skórzec
County: Siedlce
Voivodeship (province): Mazovia
Country: Poland
Coordinates: 52.08875085928634, 22.003476788508785

Description:

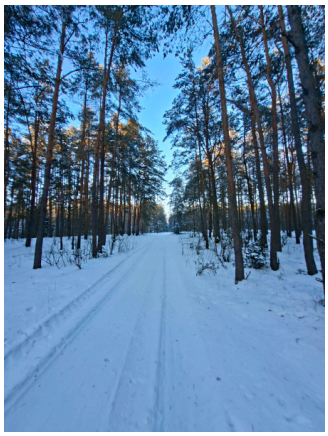


Central point of the Osińskie hamlet with a little shrine and a view to the south-west

Watermill in the hamlet of Osińskie by the river Kostrzyń, established in it's current location by the couple Kazimierz & Klara Raczko (nee Śledziewska) after they bought this plot shortly before WWI. The main house was divided into two parts – trade and residential. The trade part was supported on oak piles passing through the soft fen soil to the sandy sediment of sufficiently high bearing capacity.

Oak cross erected ca. 1918

The residential part was founded on the strong embankment. The mill was situated just by the main north-south route so it could be easily accesible for customers. All around the route and the embankment of the homestead extends a vast marshy meadow. The homestead of Kazimierz & Klara still stands despite many severe historical events including arson in autumn 1918. Today another generation of the family makes the effort to renovate the mill and bring it back to the local community.



Pine forests surrounding Osińskie from the north

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Main silhouette of the mill building with the front door; the household had a side entrance on the north

The following images taken in January 2026 show the landscape around the hamlet of Osińskie and sights from the household of Kazimierz & Klara Raczko, including an oak cross which they erected by their cornfield down the main road. Views of the watermill are taken from the bridge and present vast marshy meadows which open to the west in the valley of Kostrzyń.

View to the south; front entrance to the mill. The main road with modern bridge was moved further away from the mill – remains of the old wooden bridge with watergate are visible when the river is low

An old byre; erected in this form probably shortly after WW2

View to the west; valley of Kostrzyń with the mill building in the fore-ground and old byre behind

Collapsed chamber of a Francis turbine on the south side of the mill building. The turbine remains are buried in the river sediments.

SOUTH AFRICA

Boskloof Watermill
by Andy Selfe

I first visited Boskloof mill in May 2009, and reported at the time in my Compagnes Drift mill records as follows:

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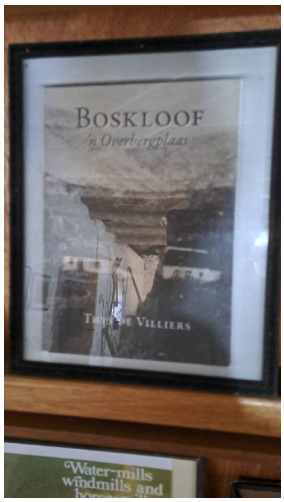
'I mentioned that I had met Jacques and Suzette Myburgh yesterday, and that Suzette had told me to contact Thys de Villiers from Boskloof Mill near Stanford. I looked it up in Chester Staples' book, Mills of Southern Africa. There are two short columns in the book but no photos. Before the day was out, we were in contact and made an arrangement to meet today at 10am. Strike while the iron is hot!

'Chester says: "*The farm Boskloof has been in the de Villiers family since 1912. It is near Stanford in the Overberg and was originally part of a bigger farm; the first grazing rights were issued in the 1760s. In the middle of the 19th century, British immigrants owned the farm; they probably built the farm's watermill, which backs onto the Karnemelksrivier. The original building was thatched, but today it has a corrugated iron roof.*

"The present owner, Thys de Villiers, says "judging by 'changes' in the yellowwood framework, the mill may have been moved from somewhere else to its present site". The mill has a wooden overshot wheel about 7.9m in diameter. Although Boskloof mill was not modernised in the 1930s, as happened to many other watermills, it remained in operation until about 1956". In the 1980s, Thys de Villiers' father restored the mill to the best of his ability, although he was unable to obtain original woods like Burmese teak for the beams. The mill's machinery is complete and with a little attention, could be restored to full operating order."

'I took along my copy and Thys read it for the first time and was happy with the content. Three hours passed like so many minutes while we discussed many points. He has researched many subjects in fine detail, woods, photography, history, the company belonging to the British immigrants mentioned above, milling, even the history of barbed wire, to try to unravel his mill's secrets!'

I heard nothing more about Boskloof. In the meantime Thys wrote a book, a compilation of all his research. It's written in Afrikaans and makes enjoyable reading for those who are '*Afrikaans magtig*'. ISBN 978-0-620-60031-6



A picture of Thys' book on display in the mill, along with copies of Walton and Staples.

As a birthday treat in April 2025, Thys was brought by his family to Beaumont Wines / Compagnes Drift where we were doing our once-a-month milling demonstration. I offered my support to help him finish off where his late father had stopped.

Thys in the canola field opposite his farmyard. The mill is centre below the other buildings.

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We started corresponding and I instructed him on the first steps of dismantling. He visited me to discuss details, bringing parts, like the stone spindle and neck bearing. There was a choice of neck bearings, none fixed in the bedstone. We decided to use one his father had made. I advised him to introduce a grease supply to it.

Thys drilled his father's neck bearing for a grease supply pipe he found.

There was a shoulder on the stone spindle which prevented it from being withdrawn upwards through the neck bearing, I had that machined off.

I had the stone spindle machined; it was too long for my lathe.

There was also a choice of pinions: one a lantern, the other a casting which was decided against immediately. There was also some machining to do on one of the flanges of the lantern, which I could do myself.

Yes! And No! Choice of pinions.

Testing the fit of the lower lantern flange on the stone spindle.

My first visit was arranged for the 9th August. The farm is 80km from home; it takes me 1¼ hours in the mobile workshop, so the more preparation that could be done in advance, the better! Thys has retired from active farming, others rent the land. Clearly now he was 'vuur en vlam' to finish his father's work! The mill was much as Chester had described it, waiting to be woken up.

I set up a laser over the centre of the bedstone and projected down so we could adjust the footstep bearing (a hard block of wood; there are worn examples on display) and added spacer blocks where there are no adjusting screws.

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Laser set up over the middle of the bedstone to adjust the footstep bearing.

We then set the chosen neck bearing in the eye of the bedstone with Epidermix, using the stone spindle to align it.

The underside of the neck bearing fixed in place with Epidermix.

We did some run-out checks on the pit wheel which weren't encouraging (80mm wobble), and discussed methods of improvement.

Testing run-out. 80mm of wobble!

Thys had by this time re-made the launder part over the wheel, with a trap-door operated from inside. He used local pine, liberally coated with Super Laykold, a tar-based product which is fish-friendly. It has a diagonal chute for excess water, over the pathway to the mill. The tail race had been dug out by then too.

The new launder Thys had made, with sloping extension to minimise splash.

We gave each other 'to-do' lists, in preparation for my next visit on 13th September. I asked Thys to bring the runner stone down and outside so I could increase the 'swallow' and improve the roughness of the lands between the furrows. For him and Pierrie his assistant, that was not an easy job, but when I arrived it was outside, still with the rigging tackle in place inside to lift it again! We had also measured the space between the clasp arms and the square on the axle and I asked him to make up pairs of 'folding wedges'.

Fitting the wedges was our first task for the day, and the difference they made for the run-out both radially and 'wobble' was impressive. We chose folding wedges because there is no angle cut away on both sides of the cross-over of the clasp arms. Pairs of folding wedges inserted from both ends exert outward force parallel to both faces. We used three pairs on each face.

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Three pairs of folding wedges on each face.

I was happy with the lay-out of the bedstone for right hand rotation. The furrows weren't too deep and the lands between were fairly rough. I was not happy with the lack of swallow at the eye of the runner.

11 harps, laid out for right hand rotation. I was happy with the bedstone.

No swallow on the runner!

Swallow added and some cracking on the lands done with a thin cutting disc.

The next job on that visit was to 'trammel' the stone spindle to make sure it was perpendicular. There were slight adjustments to make on the footstep bearing.

Makeshift trammel

Plaster of Paris cone at the top of the neck bearing.

Thys also had a local carpenter make a handsome stable door out of old and new Yellowwood *Podocarpus latifolia*, to fit an old Oregon *Pseudotsuga menziesii* frame he had, also a smart name board for the mill outside. The mill is floodlit at night with a solar system.

This side of the mill house is floodlit at night.

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24th September is Heritage Day in South Africa, so I arranged my next visit for that day. There didn't seem to be much to prevent us actually milling. Thys and Pierrie had rigged the runner back into place on the spindle; they had made a sweeper, attached to the runner with a strap, sealed off the space between the bedstone and floor with plaster of Paris and assembled the furniture with some improvements. All seemed set up for a trial. Even the door had been installed! Thys had bought grain from an old friend, now the boss at the local co-op.

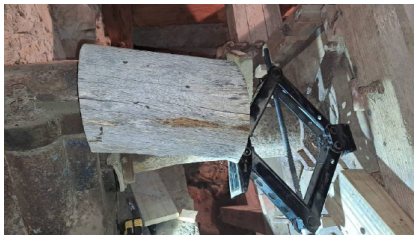
New door made from old wood!

Smart new old-Yellowwood door installed.

However our hopes were dashed! Under load, the waterwheel and axle turned but after a few turns, the pit wheel stood still! We had not noticed there was no key between the axle and the square hub, and brackets which Thys' father had made, weren't gripping on the shaft. We tried driving wedges in without success. The pit wheel also slid along the shaft causing the cogs to go completely out of mesh, damaging some of the cogs in the process.

Wedges didn't work!

Disappointed we dismantled the brackets; they are a pair, one front and one rear and considered the options. We made plans to jack it back into place. I decided to make up a two-part wooden block and hollow the halves out to match the shaft. That wasn't going to be easy, as the shaft is waisted in that area. We took some measurements at various places along that length of shaft. We also noticed a flat filed on the shaft, not corresponding exactly with the position of the hub, and a keyway through the hub itself. It had been hidden behind the brackets.



Jacking the pit wheel back into place.

A keyway in the hub, noticed for the first time.

Back at home, I selected a block of wood, the last offcut from the burnt tail pole from Mostert's Mill. I had used the rest of it as a 'new' vertical shaft in that restoration. It needed squaring off and eight holes drilled along the edges, four each side for pinch-bolts, before sawing the block in half. Also four more holes across, in case the block split while tightening down on the shaft.

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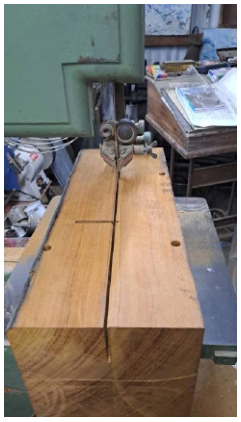


Sawn by circular saw as deeply as possible, finished in the band-saw.

I then made a flycutter for the lathe section of my Dainichi Universal Machine, mounted each half-block in turn on the cross-slide and adjusted the cutting tool to remove wood at various settings, according to the measurements we'd taken, along its length.

The fly-cutter machining wood away from one half-block.

I cut and drilled steel angles for each corner of the block, two short, two long, the latter to reach the wooden block in the middle of the pit wheel.

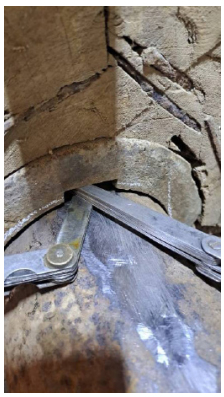
The two halves assembled.

My next visit was on 1st November. By this time we had decided to fit a key to the hub, over the flat on the shaft. The flat needed to be extended, so that was my first job, using an angle grinder followed by a flat file. We had to move the pit wheel first all the way back, then forward as far as possible. By this time, with all the activity, it was quite loose on the shaft. It wasn't easy to make an accurate flat face, the shaft is very pitted and measurements to the other side were confusing.

Extending the flat on the shaft, using a grinder, then a flat file.

We then jacked up the pit wheel and used feeler gauges to measure the thickness for the key, front and back. We detected a taper.

The other job we had to do was to sand away on the basic diameters I had machined on the two half-blocks, to fit snugly on the shaft. I rubbed chalk on the shaft, offered each block up and sanded away where the chalk showed. Eventually there was good contact along the length of the shaft.



Using two packs of feelers to measure the thickness for the key, we did this front and back.

When I was happy, we test-fitted the two. At the same time we cut off the ends of the two long angles to just touch the wooden block in the hub.

One half-block sanded to follow the waisting on the shaft.

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Pierrie assembling the block with the long angles just touching the wooden block in the hub.

By this stage, after some discussion, we had decided it would be best to have a full set of new cogs made. Thys remembered his father mentioning they were made of Milkwood Sideroxylon inerme. It's a protected species, but old dry wood is available. We polished up an old cog, and the wood certainly looks like the new Milkwood cogs Thys has had made. There are 82 and he needed a few spares, so it was an expensive decision. However there was no point in making the few that had to be replaced, with a similar wear pattern to the old ones.

We did some test fitting of the first new cogs on this visit, so Thys could get a feel of how firmly they should fit.

Fitting new cogs to the sockets. I was showing Thys how stiffly they should fit.

Worn cogs.

Graded roots of the cogs according to how they fitted in one socket, for selective assembly.

As the new cogs were made in batches, Thys fettled the roots to fit each individual socket in the pit wheel in the following weeks. Thys also replaced one spoke of the waterwheel with a piece of Tallowwood Eucalyptus microcorys; the original one of Greenheart Chlorocardium rodiei was rotten at both ends.

In that time, I was making the key. It had to be flat, without a gib head because that would be in the way of the brackets on each side of the hub. For this I used the milling machine part of my Dainichi Universal Machine. I first machined the width of a suitable piece of steel to 32mm, the width of the keyway, then machined the wide face with one end tilted up by the required amount. I only have a narrow cutter so it was necessary to make many passes. The length of the key is the same as the maximum travel of the machine so I had to be ready to cancel the feed both ends!

Machining the flat key on the Dainichi. See the head of the shaper below?

Entering the key underneath.

My next visit was on 6th December, and the first job was to fit the key. Instead of jacking the wheel, we let nature do the work and had the wheel hang on the shaft with the keyway and flat on the shaft at the bottom. The key is 250mm long and because it was awkward working underneath, once it had gone in a reasonable distance, we turned it to the top. An advantage of not jacking was that it was possible to agitate the wheel as the key went in, so that the key could align best with the flat.

The key stopped moving after entering 130mm. I was worried that a crack in the hub might be opening up. What still protruded had to be cut off, because it would be in the way of the bracket which still had to be fitted. I trimmed it off with just enough protruding to weld a slide hammer to, if it ever has to be withdrawn. I decided to fit the offcut, the thick end, from the other side. This meant a lot of grinding and filing, but in the end it went in tightly, so that we now have full contact between the keyway and the flat.

The offcut of the key protruding slightly at the front.

We could then refit the clamps, which Thys had modified to pinch the shaft more firmly, with new bolts. It was necessary to grind out a small part of the front one for the tip of the key. The brackets will also retain the keys at both ends.

Thys refitting the brackets his father had made.

The next job was to reassemble the two halves of the block over the shaft. The length of the block was calculated so the back end pushes against the middle bearing on the shaft, so that the shaft can't slide in the bearings under the meshing action of the gears. Thys then drilled the short offcuts of the long angles and we screwed them on to the wooden block in the hub, and then welded them to the long angles. I then trimmed the excess off all the Redibolts for the sake of neatness.

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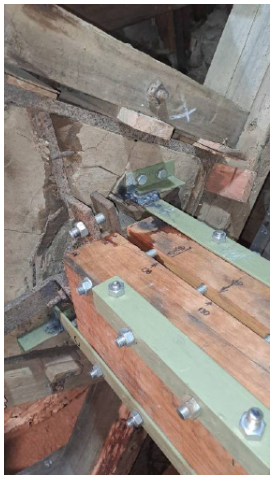
The long angles on opposite corners of the block are attached to the wooden block in the hub.



We could then do an accurate run-out check on the rim of the pit wheel. We had brought it down to 15mm. Remember we started at 80! The smallest of the measurements were over a short arc of the wheel, so there is a bulge which we can do nothing about.

Checking the run-out.

The next stage was obvious, refit the cogs! Thys was disappointed to find that some shrinkage had occurred, particularly those which he'd test fitted first. Undeterred we tore off strips of canvas as shim material and eventually all 82 were in and snug. As an ex-beekeeper, beeswax is not a problem to Thys and we applied a film to the working faces of each cog. Pierrie then carefully turned the waterwheel while we checked the meshing. We were happy so decided to test with some water. We added grain to the eye of the runner so the stones had something between them, although not closed at this stage, and after checking the operation of the trap door in the launder, gingerly opened the valve.

Pierrie checking the trap door in the launder. The new Tallowwood spoke can be seen.

Although the stones were still open, we were very pleased with the meshing. It was quiet and smooth. We stopped after a minute or two, as we noticed some of the cogs were still slightly loose. We'd had a very full and successful day. Thys' jobs include checking and tightening up each of the cogs, then drilling and fitting the retaining dowels behind the pit wheel. He must apply beeswax to the trailing side of the cogs. He can then experiment with wheat and bring the stones together and test the quality of meal he can produce! The mill last ran in 1956.

It has been fun and rewarding getting Boskloof mill to this stage. The best part has been Thys' keenness to push on with his tasks between my visits and his determination to finish the work his father didn't complete! Another dormant mill has been woken up, there is now another place where whole-wheat, stone-ground meal can be produced: the real stuff!

Andy Selfe
December 2025

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Boskloof Watermill – an Update
By Andy Selfe

At the end of December, I went back to Boskloof and we got the water-mill going. We made some settings and produced some lovely meal. Thys is delighted, we all are! We even made some bread – it was delicious! I've attached a clip of the watermill running.
You can watch it here!

USA

US Virgin Islands

Bill & Willem's Excellent Adventure in St. Croix
By Bill Cleveland and Willem van Bergen

TIMS USA and Europe met in the middle this February, touring sugar mill sites on the Caribbean island of St. Croix. In the 1989 film *Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure*, two young men travel through time to help them pass a history exam. In this 2026 reprise of the film, two TIMS members explored sugar mill ruins, wondering if they arrived 200 years too late.

Fig. 1 View looking east along the north shore from the Ham's Bluff Lighthouse. From this location, at least a half dozen windmills are visible along the coast.

Bill Cleveland hosted Willem van Bergen with visits to St. Croix sugar industry sites spanning over nearly three centuries of activity. We were fortunate to have accommodation in the estate Annaly great house, with a windmill and the island's best preserved steam mill on the property. From there, the adventures only got better and we overcame challenges such as a flat tire on a remote dirt road, learning that US National Parks Service officers have been instructed not to use the term "slavery," and remembering to drive on the left side of the road. While accessing some locations required navigation through heavy bush, thankfully none of the bees or wasps shared their sting. At some locations, we were treated to fantastic views.

Fig. 2 The great house at Annaly with windmill.

Bill welcomed the opportunity to obtain new images and resources for his website describing the sugar mills on St. Croix and Willem enjoyed his first trip to the island. We enjoyed exploring mill sites, a couple of tours of distilleries built on historic estates, meeting with quite a few local history experts, and many extraordinary views. At the estate Prosperity Farm Distillery, this is the only place on St. Croix where sugar cane

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remains grown for commercial purposes. The mill sites included a mix of steam mills, animal mills, and windmills for both crushing sugar cane and pumping water from wells.

Fig 3. Windmill foundation, off to the right, is flanked by sugar cane cultivated on the left at estate Prosperity, home of the Prosperity Farm Distillery

We visited several dozen windmills along with seeing dozens more from a distance. Close examination of the windmill openings and other information revealed that the mill towers and operations were modified over time. In some cases, the addition of a second bagasse opening, where the crushed cane was discarded from the windmill tower, suggests that the sails changed rotational direction with the modification.

Fig. 4 The windmill at estate Windsor and Windsor Forest was converted to a cistern to store water after decommissioning.

Fig. 5 The inscription stones at Windsor and Windsor Forest clearly state the construction and reconstruction dates, which are consistent with historic maps

Fig. 6 The juice trough opening facing the camera here was completely blocked up and the bottom portion of the bagasse opening to the right was blocked up, likely when the estate Sion Hill windmill was still in operation, and this may have indicated a shift to crushing cane outside the tower with horizontal crushing machinery

Of particular interest were windmills with remaining equipment. Much of the metal equipment was rounded up for salvage during the world wars and the wood removed or decayed. The Bonne Esperance windmill retains the windshaft along with the carriage that held the shaft. The Cotton Grove windmill on the east end has the machinery on the property, indicating the mill converted from vertical rollers to horizontal rollers which were driven outside the masonry tower. The twin windmills at Castle Coakley have complex masonry infrastructure including at least three cisterns to collect cane juice, elaborate tunnels to retrieve the crushed cane bagasse, and a large retaining wall separating the mills from the boiling house and other structures.

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Fig. 7 The windshaft at the Bonne Esperance mill

Fig. 8 Interior of the Bonne Esperance windmill including the carriage that held the windshaft

Fig. 9 Machinery for the Cotton Grove windmill, including beveled gears to allow the horizontal mill to crush sugar cane outside the confines of the masonry tower

Fig. 11 Each of the windmills at Castle Coakley has a large masonry-lined area beneath the mill to remove the crushed cane bagasse from the mill by donkey cart. In this image, the slanting channel on the left goes down to access one of the cisterns in which cane juice was collected.

Fig. 10 The twin windmills at Castle Coakley

The windmills have some interesting features including hearths and basements, both indicating advanced masonry skills. All of the windmills with these features were built in relatively later years, mostly in the 19th century. At the estate Diamond Keturah and estate Two Brothers windmills, the working floor rests upon a basement supported by a single central pillar. At estate The Sight, a basement runs the entire width of the mill with two shorter storage areas on either side, with a size suggesting they may have been used to store sails when the mill was not in use.

Fig. 12 Looking down the length of the basement under the access ramp to the mill above, with the distant central pillar supporting the working floor of the Diamond Keturah windmill

Fig. 13 The main basement at The Sight windmill is over 5 feet high and runs the full width of the windmill

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Hearths exist in some of the windmills that in most cases appear to have illuminated the back side of the rollers, where the sugar cane was put between the rollers for a second crushing. Examples of these where we visited included estate Paradise and Downings, estate Big Fountain, and estate Bodkin. Curiously, the flue for these hearths typically rises within the tower walls and exits over the machine slot, creating a void within the tower at the point with the least masonry around it.

Fig. 14 Hearth inside the estate Big Fountain windmill

Fig. 15 The small square near the top of the Paradise and Downings windmill is the exit of the flue. For some reason, most of the internal chimneys go between the top of the machine slot and the top of the mill.

The windmill ruins at estate Great Pond indicates that the shoreline in this area has retreated. On a 1794 map, the mill is well inland and an 1856 map shows a decommissioned tower right on the shore. What remains in 2026 is an identifiable portion of the windmill tower with smaller remnants scattered along the beach and some in the water. The mill apparently collapsed from the land that is 3-4 meters above the beach level.

Fig. 16 The 1794 and 1856 maps show the windmill in different positions relative to the shore

Fig. 17 Scattered remains of the estate Great Pond windmill on the beach. The animal mill at estate Mount Washington near the western shore is cleared to reveal a complex of plantation era structures including the remains of an animal mill with a set of wooden crushers in a unique cockpit. This is the only example of an animal mill remaining on the island that includes both the platform the animals traversed and the crushing machinery.

Fig. 18 Cockpit animal mill at estate Mount Washington

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While steam chimneys continue to dot the island, only four good examples of the steam engines along with a similar number of boilers remain on St. Croix. In addition to estate Annaly, steam mills can be found at estate Rust op Twist and estate Whim.

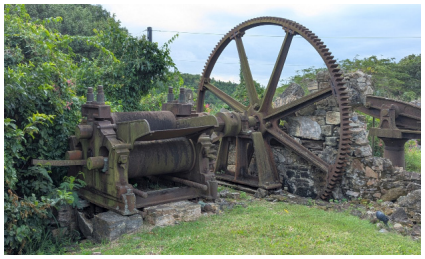

Fig. 19 Steam powered mill with horizontal rollers at estate Annaly

Fig. 20 Steam engine at estate Annaly

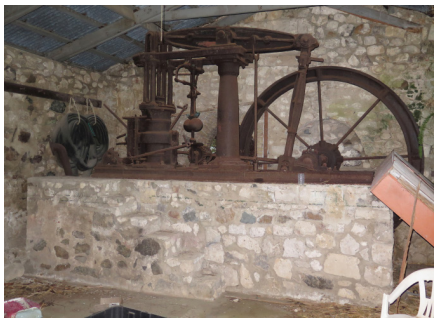

Fig. 21 Steam engine at estate Rust op Twist

Fig. 22 The steam-powered horizontal mill at Rust op Twist only has one of the three crushing rollers remaining in place

One issue confronting the survival of the steam chimneys is the potential for collapse. Of all the windmill towers and steam chimneys, all those that have collapsed had a deteriorated western face, quite possibly driven by the heating of the structure in the afternoon sun and then cooling overnight, creating a shrink-swell phenomenon more on the west face than on the east face. Many of these structures collapsed during hurricanes. A more recent example is the estate Bethlehem central sugar factory built in the early 20th century from reinforced concrete.

Fig. 23 Steam chimney at the former central factory at estate Bethlehem, with the western side of the reinforced concrete structure collapsing

The Whim estate museum has all three types of mills, with an extra steam mill brought there as an additional example. The museum has other examples of mills, that were brought from other estates on the island to display there. Late TIMS member David Hayes was instrumental in ensuring the authenticity of the exhibits at Whim. Deferred maintenance has contributed to the deterioration of many of the exhibits, creating concern for the ongoing survival of these important historic artefacts.

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Fig. 24 At The Whim, the animal mill is on the left, the windmill at the center, and the steam mill to the right. All fed the boiling house on the far right.

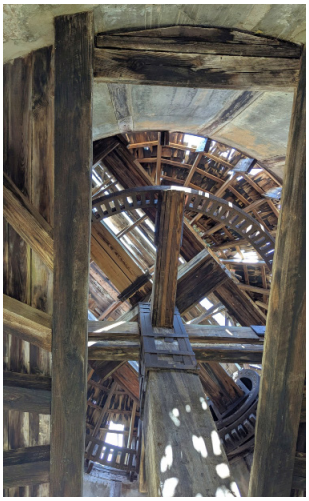

Fig. 25 Inside the windmill at The Whim

Most estates had multiple types of mills in operation. If an estate had a steam mill, usually it also maintained a windmill and animal mill in operation, in case of break downs or bumper crops. We visited estate Cane Garden and estate Rust op Twist where the windmill was next to the animal mill, of which only the animal round and not the crushing machinery remains.

Fig. 26 The animal mill and windmill at estate Cane Garden

Fig. 27 Windmill and animal mill round at Rust op Twist. The steam mill is down the hill to the right of the photo

The number and variation of windmills used to pump water from a well were all very interesting. We have seen these described as well towers, pump mills, and windpumps; suggestions welcomed for how to concisely describe these are welcomed. In a testament that the water table is lower, few wells had water, and even the deepest wells were dry. Adjustments to the sails were largely done from outside the mills, attested by the number of beam slots to support platforms around the towers.

Fig. 28 Windpump, pump mill, well tower at estate Mount Roepstorff and Southgate Farm

Fig. 29 Windpump, pump mill, well tower in the eastern portion of estate Rattan and Belvedere where we could not locate the windmill ruin nearby

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Fig. 30 Windpump, pump mill, well tower at estate Little Princess, where the water level is nearly at ground level

Fig. 31 Windpump, pump mill, well tower at estate Shoys on the grounds of the Buccaneer Hotel

Fig. 32 Windpump, pump mill, well tower at estate Manning's Bay near the airport terminal

People we met with who are involved in historic conservation and preservation shared ideas and discussed future activities in support of sharing historic resources. Local challenges include shifting generational values that de-emphasize study of the plantation period in history, along with difficulty in keeping areas clear of bush. Much of the current presentation of history focuses nearly exclusively on the lives of the enslaved, flip flopping the previous presentation which focused mainly on the planters. At the Carambola Golf Resort in estate Big Fountain, ruins that had been cleared of bush a year ago were becoming inaccessible again.

Fig. 33 We hope the rich past of St. Croix doesn't get left in the dustbin of history, such as this windmill at estate Big Fountain

Fig. 34 Sunset on St Croix

We had a great week in St. Croix and look forward to more adventures together, exploring the past in the future.

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UK

Restoration of Heage Windmill, an Update
By Alan Gifford

Editor's Note: Earlier reports on the restoration can be found in E-News Nos 38 and 39 (Spring and Autumn 2025). Alan Gifford has now sent us a final update.

Earlier issues of E-News have shown phases of the repointing of the stone tower of Heage Windmill, in Derbyshire. She is now fully completed and stands proudly on top of the ridge, probably looking better than she's done for more than 100 years!

Our team of dedicated volunteers, with our heritage plaster conservationist, Andrew Churchman, have spent many hours to bring her back to full glory. A spin off has been that we have had less rain water ingress since the work was done, considerably reducing dampness.

Fig. 1. The mill after all the lime pointing has been completed

Fig. 2. A closer look at the pointing

Fig. 3. The mill before any restoration started – taken in about 1950 – and clearly showing what can be done with a lot of effort (and money)!

Editor's Note: We have received several submissions from Andrew Findon about the restoration programme of Blaenpennal Oat Mill in Wales. The first text is an introduction to the mill and its history. Then there are updates from October 2025, and January and February 2026. Andrew will continue to send updates as the restoration progresses.

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Welcome to - Croeso i - Blaenpennal Oat Mill

By Andrew Findon

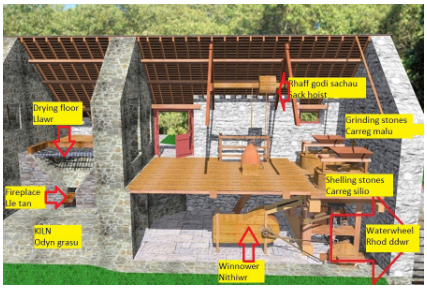
Blaenpennal Watermill is a rare surviving example of a traditional rural Welsh watermill. It is thought to date from the 18th or early 19th century and was built and designed for the production of oat meal, serving the surrounding local and farming community. It likely ceased commercial operations in the mid-20th century. It retains the original water wheel of circa 1921, made in Aberystwyth, with cast iron rims and hubs to adapt from an earlier octagonal timber shaft, to a steel shaft. The wrought iron buckets and sole boards had to be replaced by galvanised sheeting, because of cost, and availability. To remove the remains of the old buckets and sole boards, I had to drill out 450 wrought iron bolts which had expanded into the castings, trying just to knock them out would have probably resulted in broken castings, and when fitting new buckets and sole boards, 600 new stainless steel bolts were used.

The mill in 2003

Also preserved are the millstones, which are 1.3mts, probably from Anglesey, tun dated 1847 and remains of the associated machinery. One cast iron rim was found buried in the floor, which had wooden buckets and sole boards, presumably from the pre 1921 refit. The shelling stones had a wooden bearing, the grinding stones a more modern type cast iron bearing block with three brass bearing pads. The stones do not have any pattern on the faces, but whether that is due to years of wear we do not know. We took out a pair of stones from a derelict mill which seemed to have been used for oats, but those stones had a simple spiral pattern.

The mill in 2026

The structure and setting of the mill represent a key part of Wales's rural and industrial heritage and is a unique survival. Records show that it has been a "grain mill " since 1690, and adjacent field names suggest it had a previous use as a pandy (woollen fulling mill), maybe connected with the Strata Florida Estate, operated by the Cistercian monks; so as a mill site it may go back to the 13th century. Of course in those in ancient times, mills were the leading technology of the time, and the start of producing a product with energy other than human or horse power. It was said that the two most important buildings, were the chapel or church, and the mill. The chapel nourished the soul, and the mill clothed and fed the body. The mill pond also served to provide habitat for wildlife such as fish, birds, bats, and insects, a store of water in times of shortage, sheep washing, and some other facilities we may not put in print, but traditional in that era.



Computer illustration and terms

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The current restoration is a phased programme to progress the initial restoration of the mill, started in 2005. The ultimate aim is to bring the mill back into production of Welsh oatmeal. We have interest from the international Gaia Foundation who are committed to sustainable agriculture and who have contacts with farmers who want to grow old varieties of oats and have been looking for a way of processing them into a useful product. When we contacted Gaia to say we are restoring our mill to working condition and expect to be able to produce oatmeal in the traditional manner they were very keen to work with us. The processing will be in line with old methods using mill-stones and drying by a wood fired kiln, although some slight modifications will be required for modern health and safety standards. In my research I came across a collection of oat recipes, in the National Library Aberystwyth, which showed how oats were a staple part of the rural diet.

The mill house and pond

Pre 1921 waterwheel with buckets and sole boards of timber

The mill building is stable, weathertight and just needs the internal machinery repaired. We are expecting to be able to achieve this by the end of 2026. We now have a team of nine volunteers, who are giving one day every two weeks, and some of the repairs of the equipment will be done by a millwright in Worcestershire, Adam Marriot, of Teme Valley Heritage Engineers Ltd, Stockton on Teme. I was lucky to have been able to contact the son of the last miller in Lampeter, who revealed a lot of the finer details of how the milling process was carried out. So this is a result of 20 years of dedicated work and research.

Volunteers at work

If you want to keep in touch with progress just email blaenpennalmill@gmail.com with "Keep in Touch" with your name and location, and we will send you regular progress reports. If you have any queries or skills which you think may help, please let us know.

Andrew Findon.
05-.02-2026

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Blaenpennal Oat Mill - Project update 24 October 2025
By Andrew Findon

Floor view

Runner stone removed

Runner stone shaft

Shaft bearing and gear

We had our working day in the mill on Thursday 23rd October, 11 am to 6pm, to get the grinding bedstone lifted. I had already managed to remove the rhynd by making an extractor tool to pull it off the shaft without damage.

This left the bedstone bearing block in place, which we removed gradually by removing the wedges holding it into the bedstone, and the bearing blocks, and lifting it off the spindle.

The grinding stone shaft was lifted out with the stone nut gear, which appear to be re-usable with a bit of cleaning.

I have had an offer of maybe borrowing a chain saw mill to convert our fallen beech trees into planks to make the 200 cogs we need for the pit wheel and spur wheel.

I will report what we have done, with Adam Marriot, our millwright, to agree our next steps.

Thanks to our volunteers Andy, Ian, Paula, Nick, Phillip and Martin, for all their hard work.

We will continue the work in three weeks, on Thursday 13th November at 11am.

I have been offered a meeting with some oat growers in December.

That’s all for now, all the best, Andrew.

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Blaenpennal Oat Mill - Project update 21st January 2026

By Andrew Findon

Restoration work is continuing, all the shelling and grinding stones have been removed for inspection, as well as well as the stone nut shafts and their bearings. Two of the removed stones will need re-banding along with a stone to replace the broken stone. The shafts will need repairs to the journals, as well as replacing the brass bearing blocks in the grind stone bearing holders. The bearing in the shelling bedstone was a simple wooden bearing which had disintegrated.

One of the millstones

We are not sure where the millstones came from, but suspect it may have been Anglesey. If you can identify them from the photo, please let me know.

We now have a team of nine enthusiastic local volunteers who come for a day once every two weeks.

Paula, Ian and Phillip cleaned out the pit wheel pit, but no treasures were found.

Roy and Andy have made a start on cutting the large beech trees, which fell down last winter, into slices which can be cut into wooden cogs for the pit wheel and the great spur wheel, using Roy's chain saw mill on site. The aim is to use local timber whenever possible, which was done to replace the floor boards and beams of the stone floor.

The next steps will be to determine which timbers of the hurst frame need replacing, and try to source new oak locally. The remaining tuns and hoppers are in good enough condition to have copies made, so Adam Marriot will be collecting them to make the copies at his own workshop in Stockton, Worcestershire.
The winnower had been attacked by woodworm, but we should be able to make a replacement on site.

We are still in touch with the Gaia Foundation (thanks to Anne Parry) with regard to supplies of heritage and various other oats. They have asked me to give their members a talk on Welsh oat mills.

So the work is so far continuing according to schedule, but of course there may be unexpected items we have not yet found.

We will continue the work on Thursday 29th January 11am.

That's all for now, All the best, Andrew.

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Blaenpennal Oat Mill - Project update 10th February 2026

By Andrew Findon

Machining of shaft to restore bearing surface

Restoration work is continuing.
The remaining set of stone furniture from the grinding side has been collected by Adam Marriot and taken back to his workshop in readiness to make the two new sets. He has also taken the mill stone shafts for repair and already trued the bearing surfaces, in preparation for sleeving to give a true surface for the bearings.

New bands will be needed for the old millstones and replacement stones which I bought many years ago, which are fortunately the right size. I also have two pairs of French Burrs (again bought many years ago) which we won't need for the oatmeal project as far as we know at present.

We have determined which timbers of the hurst frame need replacement, and try to source new oak locally. We are finalising the cutting list for the oak for the hurst frame and stone location timbers. The order for the new oak has been placed, which is expected to arrive in about 2 to 3 weeks. We will be constructing a wooden stone crane, which will allow us to put the stones back in place without having to use scaffolding, and easily take them up again if the runner stone requires any dressing.

Roy and Andy have continued cutting the large beech trees which fell down last winter, into slices which can be cut into wooden cogs for the pit wheel and the great spur wheel.

Other jobs include making new doors and windows to replace the temporary ones which are at least keeping the weather out.

We have a growing number of people interested in the project, so if you know of anyone who may be interested please give them this email address and ask them to email this address with their name and we will add them to our mailing list.

We will continue the work on Thursday 12th February 11am.

That's all for now,

All the best, Andrew.

01974-251231. blaenpennalmill@gmail.com

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Windmill in Thaxted, Essex, Seeks Links with Windmills World-Wide.

By Anne Mason & Ian Roberts

The Windmill in Thaxted, Essex, UK, built by local entrepreneur John Webb in 1804, is currently undergoing repair and conservation in a two -year £1.6 million project.

Fig. 1 Thaxted Windmill 1895, also known as John Webb or Lowe's Mill (the Lowe's were millers and associated with the Mill for many generations).

The capital works will conserve this Grade II listed Windmill and its machinery by carrying out a comprehensive programme of structural and millwrighting works, so that it is no longer 'at risk'. These works include replacing the eroded brickwork, both inside and out, and repairing the machinery, including the sails and stocks.

Fig. 2 Thaxted Windmill encased in scaffolding February 2026. Image credit: Pyramid Scaffold Design & JM Media

Fig. 3 Detail of break wheel and canister block 2026. Image credit: Mark Rickards

A wide range of free activities will take place alongside the capital works. Training in heritage skills will enable volunteers to be researchers, interpreters, guides, producers of learning activities, and conservators. Subjects and themes have been extended to the wider related heritage, such as: researching family history, agriculture past and present, photographing historic buildings and landscapes, mills in paintings, folksongs and folklore.

This project has benefitted from funding from: the National Lottery Heritage Fund, Historic England, the Pilgrim Trust, Essex Heritage Trust, the Thaxted Charities - Hunts and Yardleys, and the generous help of Thaxted Residents. An ongoing Buy-a-Brick scheme enables you to add your support -

Purchase a brick | John Webb's Windmill

Fig. 4 Thaxted Windmill in 2024. Image credit: Mark Rickards

Click here for printable version

The Thaxted Windmill Trustees and the Project Activities Manager are very keen to make contact with windmills undergoing conservation elsewhere, to share knowledge and expertise and to exchange information about the heritage and history of these wonderful buildings.

If you are interested, please contact:

johnwebbswindmill@gmail.com

USA

Saving Volendam Windmill
By Barbara Volkov

I live in Holland Township, in Hunterdon County, on the westernmost edge of central New Jersey — home to the Volendam Windmill. I'm writing a story about the mill and its maker, Poul Jorgensen, who grew up in Copenhagen during WWI, came to the USA as a young man, worked as a machinist, moving to Holland Township in the 1960s.

After extensive research involving trips to visit windmills in Europe, Poul, with the help and support of his wife Mae, embarked on the epic adventure of building his own windmill. My grandmother took me to see it when I was eight years old and it was newly built. I met Poul and Mae, and we had a tour of the Windmill that has remained vivid in my imagination ever since.

Fig. 1 Volendam Windmill early 1970's

After Poul died, and then Mae, the windmill was passed on to Mae's nephew, Charles Brown, who kept it maintained to some degree, but after Charles died and his sons inherited it, they had no time to take care of it, and likely also no funds for repairs. It is now in a deplorable condition.

Fig. 2 Volendam Windmill 2021

TIMS member Charles Yeske met me at the mill several years ago and we walked through it together. It was a sad sight, both inside and out. He noted that there are mistakes Poul made in the construction that would prevent it from being used to make sellable flour, as the Board of Health told Poul when it was built, to his great disappointment.

I don't know if these are correctable issues or not but I would love to see the mill looking strong again, and would be especially thrilled if it could also work to grind local grain for bread. I love the idea, as Poul did, that it could work with just the power of the wind. I believe it's a huge mistake to allow this once beautiful windmill to fall apart and become nothing more than a memory and a mysterious ruin on a hill.

It would be difficult for the family and the Township of Holland, for which the windmill has been an icon, to find the funds to help save the mill. The predicted cost would be somewhere around $300,000. Still, I feel sure that there are people who would like to see it restored to its original glory, and if possible, working to grind grain into flour.

As the manager of Hunterdon Symphony, my plan is to create a multi-media concert event around the story of the windmill. Our conductor will write the music, and an artist from Holland Township will illustrate a printed book, images from which will be projected on a screen over the orchestra during the live event.

We actually just tested out this exact scenario, for a different theme, with a concert called "Seven Stories of Old Hunterdon", and though I have many notes-to-self for how to improve it, it worked well and was enthusiastically received. It was billed as a Concert for Young People, but attended most eagerly by adults, including the County's most passionate historians. I know they would love a similar event about the windmill.

I love the Volendam Windmill, and the Poul Jorgensen of my imagination. I intend to keep him and his story alive, and to bring awareness to the windmill, its importance, and its current plight. My aim is for the concert and the book to inspire local groups to take on the challenge of restoration.

I joined TIMS for information and inspiration to help me finish the story, and possibly to find advice and resources for windmill restoration. If anyone has any suggestions please get in touch by email:

bkrvolkov@lakefamilies.com

Posts from the Tide Mill Institute

Posted on September 22, 2025:
Harpswell's Many Tide Mills
Video: Harpswell's Many Tide Mills

Posted on October 27, 2025:
Study Challenges Tidal Energy Ecology Fears
Study Challenges Tidal Energy Ecology Fears

Posted on December 16, 2025:
Using Tidal Energy to Make 'Green Hydrogen'
Using Tidal Energy to Make "Green Hydrogen"

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YouTube Videos

Here are some more interesting videos sent in by mill friend Gerard Barendse:

The REAL Reason Medieval Windmills Still Run After 600 Years

IRAN

The Old Windmill in Nashtifan

See the 1,000-Year-Old Windmills Still in Use Today | National Geographic

GERMANY

Before The Grid: Water Powered Sawmill with Wooden Gears

LATVIA

Āraiši Windmill, Latvia

BOOK CORNER
by Leo van der Drift

We start this edition of the Book Corner with an offer of old TIMS publications. Our President Ton Meesters has collected these and they can be ordered from him.

Secondly, there is an announcement of an in-depth study on the history of millstones in The Netherlands. It will come out later this year, but can already be ordered.

TIMS member Berthold Moog has produced a paper version (in German) of his important work “Introduction to Molinology”, which he wrote especially for TIMS.

In addition, we have a publication from Germany, one from Finland and one from Estonia.

Please note that as usual prices are indicative and postage always comes extra, unless stated otherwise.

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Promotion:

1. TIMS Publications for sale.

Many old issues of our journal International Molinology, most volumes in the series Bibliotheca Molinologica and TIMS Symposium Transactions can be ordered now at much reduced prices.

Whether you are far from complete, or just miss one or two of these, this is your chance to obtain it!

If you are interested, please get in touch with Ton Meesters, specifying what you are looking for. He will be pleased to send you a quotation.

E-mail: ton.meesters6@gmail.com

2. ***Molenstenen, de Geschiedenis van een algemeen maar onbekend Cultuurgoed, van de prehistorie tot ca 1955 [Millstones. The History of a Common but Unknown Cultural Asset, from Prehistory until c1955]***, by Jan Scheirs (editor).

A special book on millstones will be published in May of this year. Never before has a comprehensive overview been written about the developments in shape and size, type of stones and their use. Six authors, mill experts, archaeologists and a geologist, led by editor (and TIMS member) Jan Scheirs, describe the history of the millstones in successive time periods.

The book will be published in a limited edition, is extensively documented and richly illustrated.

This study will be of interest to:
- millers working with stones
- archaeologists finding these stones during excavations
- anyone interested in the history of our daily bread.

The book is based on the situation in The Netherlands and written in Dutch, but also includes a thorough English summary because many developments have a wider applicability.

The book is available for pre-order now. If you do so, the book will be sent to you free of charge upon publication. If you would like to order the book from abroad, please contact the Dutch Mill Society at dhm@molens.nl. The price of the book will be increased by the shipping costs.

In Dutch, with summary in English.

Hard cover, size: 25.5 x 18.5 cm, c148 pages. Richly illustrated in full colour.
Price 29,95 EUR.

Published by De Hollandsche Molen [Dutch Mill Society],
Website: Molenwinkel | De Hollandsche Molen
E-mail dhm@molens.nl

***3. Mühlenkunde, Ein Handbuch zur Technik und Geschichte der traditionellen Mühlen*, by Berthold Moog.**

Long standing TIMS member Berthold Moog has written several publications and articles published by our Society, including the *Dictionary of Molinology* and, more recently, *Introduction to Molinology* in 11 chapters. Both works are available on the TIMS web-site as PDFs.

An edited version of this last work entitled *Mühlenkunde* ["Molinology"] has now been published by the Swiss Mill Friends. In 18 chapters, subjects ranging from the construction of mills and their machinery, mill types and functions, the millers and their profession to cultural aspects of mills are dealt with. Especially recommended to those who like to have a paper version of Berthold's study in hand and are proficient in the German language. A full review will be published in the upcoming edition of our journal *International Molinology.*

In German.
Hard cover, A4 size, 480 pages with 648 illustrations and 23 tables.
Published by VSM/ASAM (Swiss Mill Friends), Binningen, 2025.
Price: 130 CHF.

Available from the publisher, e-mail info@muehlenfreunde.ch
Website Publikationen - Mühlenfreunde

***4. Wasserkraft zwischen Wehra und Wutach. Mühlen, Sägen und Textilfabriken im südlichen Schwarzwald und am Hochrhein bis zum Zeitalter der Elektrizität*, by Achim Bonenschäfer.**

This publication by Achim Bonenschäfer is entitled in translation "Hydropower between Wehra and Wutach. Mills, sawmills, and textile factories in the southern Black Forest and

on the Upper Rhine until the age of electricity".

Renewable energies are the big issue of our time. However, this is by no means a new phenomenon, as the engine of industrialisation in areas without fossil fuels was the well-known water power.

The book offers comprehensive documentation of all traditional mills and old saw mills in the district of Waldshut (southern Black Forest area). However, this journey through the region's industrial history also covers the numerous oil mills, tanneries, hammer mills, plaster works, and hemp mills that were once powered by waterwheels. Later, as the textile industry became industrial, spinning mills and weaving mills with their modern turbine systems were established along the rivers and streams. And finally, from around 1900 onwards, it was numerous small and large power stations that helped the light bulb and the electric home loom to break through, even in the remotest corners of the Hotzenwald.

This colourful study provides a general audience with an overview of the history of hydropower use in the region. It is noteworthy, for example, that today's global company "Sto Baustoffe" originated from a hereditary mill owned by the Landlords of Stühlingen. Similarly, the globally active "Zwirnerei an der Wutach" has its origins in the sawmill of a rafting cooperative. In addition, the book provides details from the commercial history of the individual towns and their immediate surroundings, which may have been forgotten even by local historians. Last but not least, "Wasserkraft zwischen Wehra und Wutach" is aimed at readers from long-established milling and sawmill families: the meticulously compiled evidence of kinship and marriage ties among mill owners over the last 200 years gives today's heirs the opportunity to leaf through the book as if it were a family album.

With technical data on almost 500 water powered mills and richly illustrated with over 1,000 photos and historical maps, this magnificent volume contains nothing less than the hydro-energetic memory of an entire region!

In German.
Hard cover, size 30.5 x 21.5 cm, 656 pages with over 1,000 illustrations, mostly in colour.
Published by Siedentop Verlag, Heidenheim an der Brenz, 2025. ISBN 978-3-925887-42-0.
Price €85.

Available directly from the publisher.
Website Wasserkraft zwischen Wehra und Wutach | Bonenschäfer Achim | ISBN 978-3-925887-42-0 | ISBN 9783925887420

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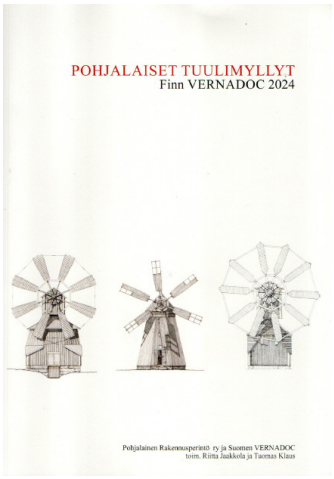
***5. Pohjalaiset Tuulimyllyt [Ostrobothnian Windmills]*, by Riitta Jaakkola and Tuomas Klaus (editors).**



In the summers of 2024 and 2025, the Ostrobothnian Architectural Heritage Organisation and Finnish VERNADOC Network organised field studies in Southern Ostrobothnia. During these studies, 20 architects from Finland and abroad documented and drew seven windmills in the towns of Jalasjärvi and Seinäjoki. The selected windmills represent all three types of windmills that can be found in Finland: the post mill, the hollow post mill and the smock mill. Articles by experts, including one by TIMS member Kirsti Horn, shed a light on the history, operation and technology of the windmills. However, the detailed drawings (in a scale of 1:50 and 1:25) produced during the field studies are the central part of this report. They record local cultural heritage and help people from near and far to see the value of mill construction. [text based on the description on the back cover].

In Finnish.
Soft cover, A4, 159 pages with both historic and contemporary photographs as well as many measured drawings in b&w.
Published by the Ostrobothnian Architectural Heritage Organisation and Finnish VERNADOC, 2025.
ISBN 978-952-88-0820-6. Price €29.

Available from the publisher. Website: Vernadoc-julkaisusarja / Vernadoc Documents

***6. Pöörlev Pärand, Eesti Tuulikud; Spinning Heritage, Estonian Windmills*, by Rasmus Tähepõld.**

Readers of E-News will know Rasmus from two articles in the previous issue of E-News. He has now produced a book on the windmills in his home country, Estonia. It is essentially an inventory of the still existing mills in his country. He worked on this book for 11 years, visiting, documenting and photographing each mill. The result is a well-produced book in a size pleasant to hold in your hands. The content is well laid out and gives a fascinating impression of the rich Estonian windmill heritage. Because the book is bilingual, the second language being English, it is easily accessible for mill friends across the globe. The book concludes with a page showing some statistics on the mills, geographically as well as by type.

Bilingual, in Estonian and English.
Hard cover, size 24 x 17 cm, 303 pages with several hundreds of photos, most of them in full colour.
Published by the author, 2025, ISBN 978-9916-4-3259-4.
Price €35 (this price includes shipping within Europe).

Available from the author, e-mail rasmustahepold@gmail.com

Please remember to send us details of the books that you would like to see here next time!

MESSAGE FROM THE E-NEWS TEAM

We hope that you have enjoyed this issue of E-News. We are dedicated to spreading this information to all mill friends, so please feel free to forward it to anyone who might also be interested. And remember, if you have any news items, short articles, books, announcements, photographs or anything else that you want to share about mills, please send it to the editor, Holly Parton, tims-newsletter@molinology.org

This Newsletter cannot exist without you!
The next issue, No 41, is scheduled for October 2026.

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