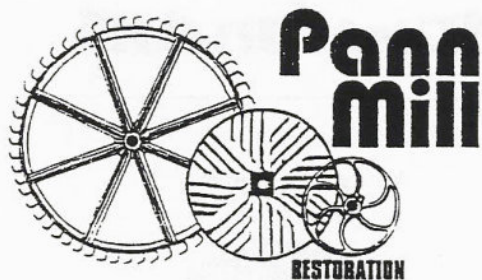


Pann Mill Times



SEPTEMBER 2000

No. 7

Pann Mill Times gives news of the restoration of cornmilling on this site, a project of the High Wycombe Society. It is situated only three minutes walk from the High Street and is owned by Wycombe District Council.

PROJECT LEADER'S JOTTINGS

WE PUT THE 'MILL' IN MILLENNIUM

This 7th edition of Pann Mill Times is a celebration of the success of the High Wycombe Society's restoration of Pann Mill on National Mills Day May 14th 2000.

On this warm, sunny Sunday, the hopes and efforts of so many local people were realised as Pann Mill (the only working watermill in South Bucks) milled flour again after resting for 80 years.

It was a memorable, pleasurable occasion on a charming historic site. Dignitaries attended, and crowds were so generous, that all restoration costs incurred during the previous six months were covered. There was a wonderful sense of achievement in the air as visitors relaxed over tea in the garden.

When reflecting on the twenty years that I have been associated with Pann Mill, I give thanks for the following:

THE IDEA. Jack Scruton MBE, who had the foresight to recognise that this site of industrial heritage was worth saving.

THE FABRIC. Millwrights, architects, builders and all volunteers who contributed to the project, even, when at times, there seemed to be a potential lack of WATER!

THE FINAL PUSH. Dedicated workers numbering twenty three, who saw the project to fruition with real determination, from Christmas '99.

This exciting project lives on.

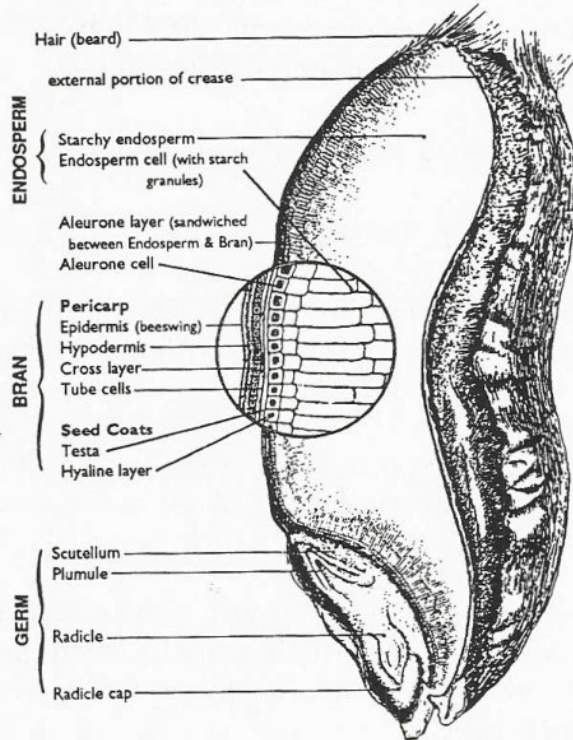
There are many tasks to be undertaken if stoneground flour is to be milled and sold on a regular basis. Our workshop needs upgrading, and several items of ancient milling machinery await renovation.

Our new PANN MILL GUIDE & SITE HISTORY, produced for sale on Wycombe Show 2000 Open Day, charts the progress of the restoration project.

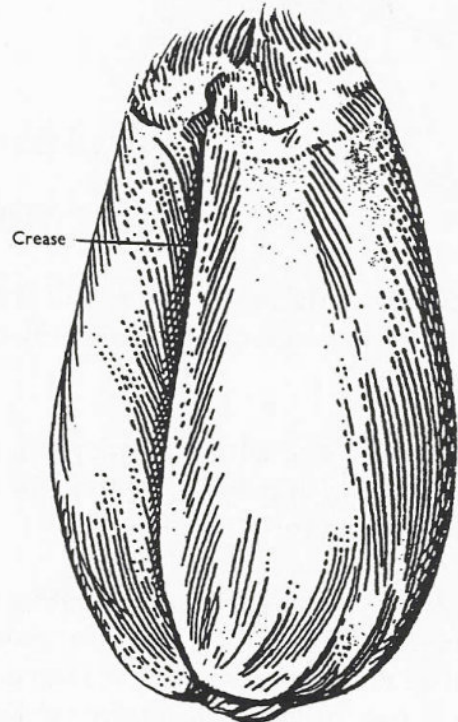
Myra

KNOW YOUR WHEAT GRAIN

A grain of wheat cut lengthwise (through crease)



Whole grain of wheat



NOTE: the wheat grains shown here are magnified more than 250 times.

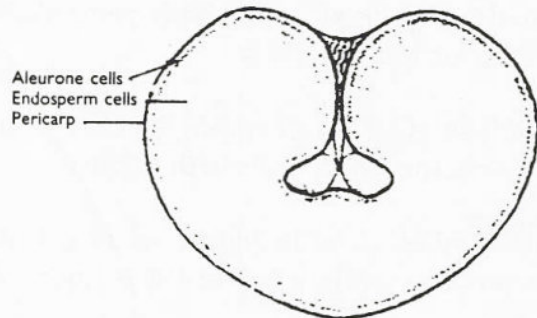
A SEED

The wheat grain as a seed is fitted for reproducing the plant from which it came. The **germ** is an embryo plant, with a radicle which can grow into a root system and a plumule which can develop into stems, leaves and ears. The **pericarp** is a tough skin which protects the inner seed from soil organisms which may attack it. The inner **seed coats** control the intake of water by the seed. The **endosperm** is the food reserve on which the young plant lives until it has developed a root system.

WHICH IS MILLED

The purpose of milling is to reduce the wheat grain to a fine flour. A single grain makes about 20,000 particles of flour. In **wholemeal flour** all parts of the grain are included, but in producing **white flour** the seed coats and the embryo are not used. Instead, they are flattened and removed as small flakes, by sifting over nylon or silk mesh. These flakes are referred to collectively as **wheatfeed**.

A grain of wheat cut across the middle



FOR OUR NOURISHMENT

The flour which comes from the grain of wheat is used to make many foods such as bread and biscuits, cakes and confectionery, puddings and pies. This flour also provides nourishment essential for good health and is rich in carbohydrates (for energy), protein (for growth and development), fibre (for a healthy digestion), the essential B vitamins (for good health, good nerves and good digestion), and important minerals like iron (for healthy blood) and calcium (for strong bones and teeth). Wheatfeed, not used in making white flour is a valuable food for livestock, and so helps to provide eggs, bacon, meat and milk. Bran and wheatgerm derived from the milling process are used for health foods.

PANN MILL'S MYRA KING

This Newsletter, as mentioned by Myra King in her Jottings, celebrates the Society's fine record of restoring Pann Mill - the little that remained - to its long tradition of milling flour. In the Society's Summer 2000 Newsletter, tribute was paid in good measure to the team and its leader.

It is fitting to consider the leader herself, who has taken full responsibility for the project for more than twelve years, although answerable, of course, to the Executive Committee.

She was I believe, inspired by Jack Scruton MBE, who died in 1991. In her tribute to him in the book which celebrates his life, she wrote, 'I will always be grateful to him for his unending determination to conserve and create a good environment in my beloved High Wycombe, the town where I was born.'

There is a saying 'Cometh the hour, cometh the man'. We can think of a number of people to whom this applies; certainly Jack Scruton is one and Project Leader Myra King is another.

Having been a member of the restoration team for ten years, I am in a good position to assert that Myra's many attributes have well matched those needed to see the Pann Mill job through. I will not attempt to list those remarkable attributes! Society members

and townsfolk at large are lucky that she, like Jack, was in the right place at the right time.

At a party Myra threw for the team on the eve of historic May 14th, some lines written by 'Anon' were read out. This Newsletter seems the right place to record them for a wider audience. I hope 'Anon' will excuse any small discrepancies, and the title which I've added.

PANN MILL'S MYRA KING

Myra, our Mill Queen,
Stand up and be seen.
For over twelve years
You have led volunteers.
Queen King we applaud
Pann Mill's now restored!

Finally an extract from an article in the Society's Newsletter of Summer 1988 entitled Pann Mill: exciting times on the way, by Myra King
'A donation from Marks and Spencer in their centenary year made it possible for the Trees and Water Group to pursue our dream of restoring the last remaining working water wheel on the River Wye and selling stone ground flour to the people of Wycombe'.

Peter

KNOW YOUR WHEAT GRAIN

The Information Sheet opposite, from the Flour Advisory Bureau, provides an insight into the secrets of the grains of wheat which are now stored in the mill. Not to everyone's taste, to study the constituent parts of a grain, when there are words like aleurone, endosperm and pericarp! Perhaps these words might come in useful for scrabble. The Sheet gives the impression that one could live on just bread - and water, such is the nourishment claimed for wheat flour. However, it is very satisfying to know that the mill is doing a good job in providing such excellent food.

MILLING AROUND

Statistics - May 14th Open Day:

23 team members. A photograph of the augmented team on the day, numbering 23, appeared in the High Wycombe Society's Summer 2000 Newsletter..

£200 was received from the sale of wholemeal flour milled on the day.

5 miles. The Malacca wheat that was milled on the day was grown only 5 miles away, near Piddington. Team members have been invited to Kensham Farm, Cadmore End, to see this year's harvesting of the wheat that will be milled next year.

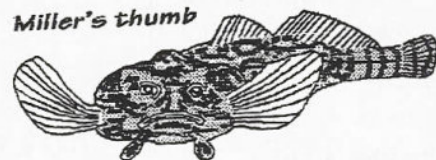
The resulting flour has made excellent bread, indicating the flour is 'strong'.

Winnower: On Open Day September 3rd, visitors will see this very old grain cleaner at an early restoration stage. The two dozen or so cast-iron parts will be hanging up, having been undercoated.

Miller's Thumb: This fish was so named because its flattened head was said to resemble the thumb of the miller. The broad shape of the miller's thumb was said to have developed by continually pinching grain between thumb and forefinger, in order to estimate the proportion of useful meal the grain could yield. This estimate affected how much the miller took for himself as payment.

Chaucer in *The Canterbury Tales* (c1387) had some sharp comments to make about the miller, including

'His was a master -hand at stealing grain.
He felt it with his thumb and thus he knew
Its quality and took three times his due'



We are indebted to Wycombe Wildlife Group for this illustration, and for the information in their May 1999 Newsletter, that Miller's Thumb fish are in waters around the Rye. Wildlife Watch, a junior branch of the Wildlife Trusts, found the fish at their March 1999 meeting.

How appropriate that this fish is found where there have been so many cornmills.

This fish is also known as a bullhead.

Swans: Visitors to the mill have recently had the opportunity of seeing the swan family of nine enjoying the fast flowing waters of the River Wye, just below Pann Mill bridge. Parents David (ringed DTC) and Amanda, escorted their one week old cygnets -on foot of course -from the Abbey lake to the river in the first week of May. In the last week of August the parents persuaded two cygnets to join them on the Dyke for flying practice.

Roller mills: In the March 2000 issue of this newsletter, roller mills were said to use vertical steel cylinders. David Lindsey of the other Buckinghamshire working watermill, Ford End Mill, took issue with this statement. Watch out for the September 2000 issue which will throw light on the matter.

Team members - Myra King, Leader: Tel: (01494) 523968 & 447949

Ian Barratt

Annabelle Giorgetti

Bianca Iacofano

John Mumford

Owen Rush

Nick Turner

Nick Dewey

Peter Hazzard

Carina Iacofano

Don Murray

Margaret Simmons

Robert Turner

Nick Gillott

Gary Howard

Cathy Kraft

Karen Roberts

Harry Turner

Eric van Voorden

**With special assistance
from**

David Nicholls

Christopher Wallis

Pann Mill Times appears in March and September

THE HIGH WYCOMBE SOCIETY

Honorary Secretary: Frances Presland, 61 Hicks Farm Rise, High Wycombe, Bucks HP13 7SX. Tel: (01494) 523263