

March 2013 Mike Bennett - 'Mills of Pembrokeshire'

A most interesting talk was given by our guest speaker, Mike Bennett, whose subject 'Mills of Pembrokeshire', was a refreshing aspect of history.

We were well informed of the many such sights in our own area of South Pembrokeshire, more especially Carew Mill which is familiar to most people in this area.

This mill dates back to the mid 19th century, with its heavy stone grinders driven by a water wheel supplied by a picturesque lake and a landscaped castle to add to the scene.

Other mills were highlighted in the talk, notably Solva in the north of the county, which is still a working mill, tho dating back to the 17th century, as were St Dogmaels and Cenarth. It was interesting to learn that most of these were still grinding corn through their heavy stone crushers.

Reference was made to Rock Mill, built in the 1890's, water driven and still in production today.

We were informed that the National Museum at St. Fagans exhibits with no less than six reconstructed mills in their grounds, which surely reflects their important contribution during that early period.

To summarise, we were told that most villages throughout Wales would contain at least one mill to sustain daily life, whether water driven or mechanical.

Most of these would still be in working order, mainly due to the heavy cast iron construction of the water wheel.

(Doug Havard)