

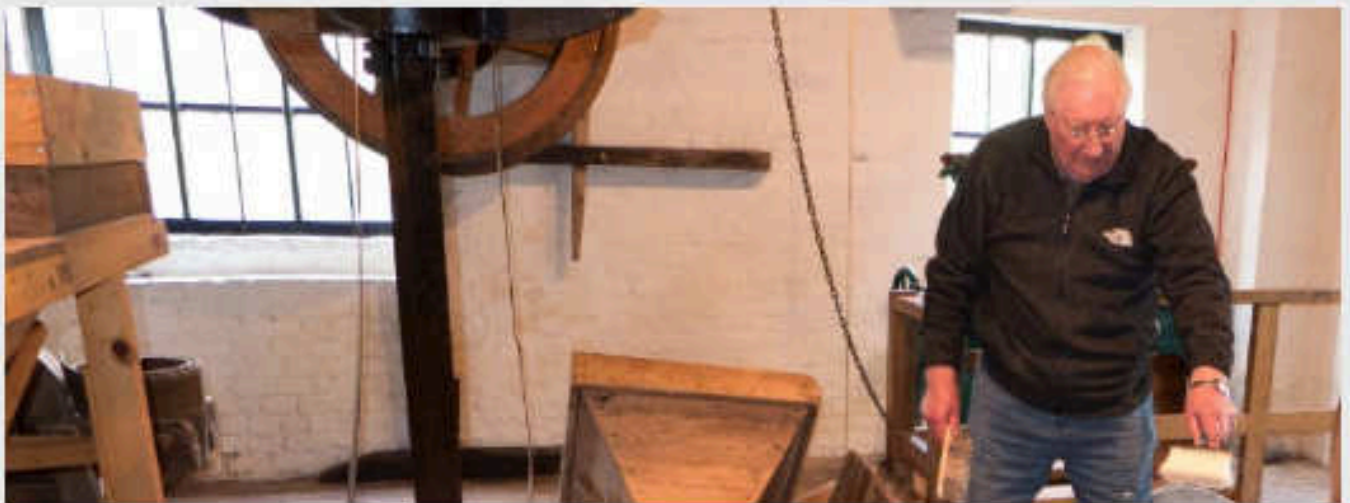


**Bunbury Mill**



## **Bunbury Mill Newsletter Summer 2016**

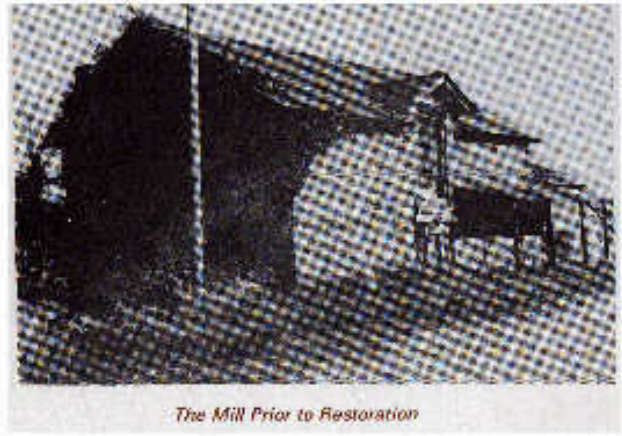
### **Ernest Croley**



**We report with great sadness the passing of Ernest Croley, who died on 28th May 2016 at the age of 83.**

**Ernest was a well known resident of Bunbury, and the village holds many prominent and long-lasting memorials to his undaunted determination and commitment to major schemes for its enhancement and preservation, including the village hall, Sadlers Wells wood, and the village playing fields.**

**In this newsletter we record with awe and gratitude his pivotal role in the preservation of Bunbury Mill for the benefit of future generations**



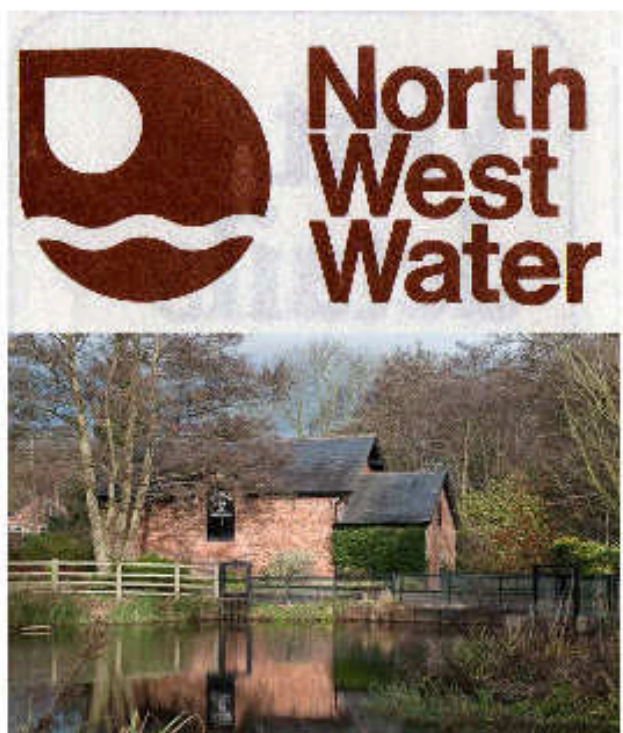
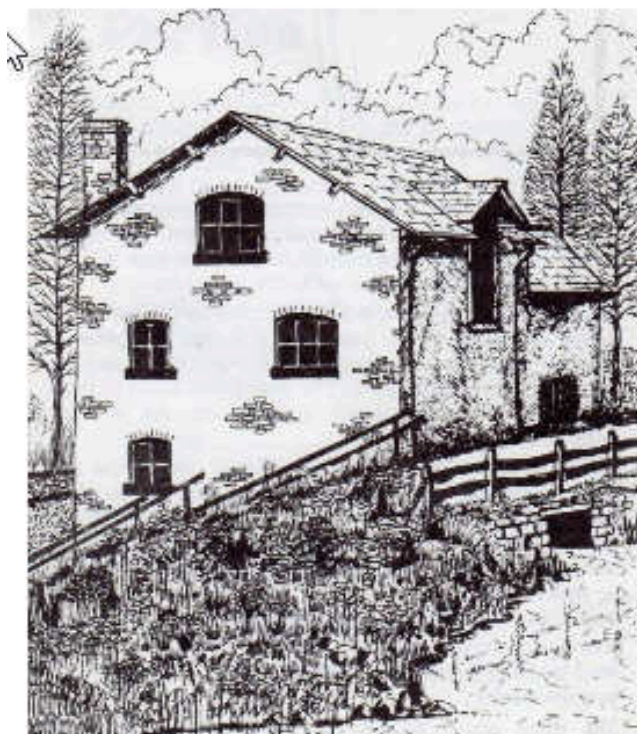
*The Mill Prior to Restoration*

Old photos of the mill before restoration work started in 1975

The present Bunbury Mill was built in about 1840 on the site of a previous mill destroyed by fire. It operated commercially until 1960, when it was put out of action by a major flood. The living was by then so sparse that the mill was not worth repairing, and it was boarded up and left to go derelict. The land was later sold to the local authority, then passed to the NW Water Authority, for the construction of a waste water treatment plant. The NWWA drew up plans which included demolition of 'the old buildings on the site'.

Enter Ernest Croley - he led a group of men who discovered what was in the buildings, and successfully lobbied the NWWA to sponsor a Job Creation Scheme, which instead of demolishing the mill, restored it to operational status, and opened it in 1977 as a working heritage museum.

Unfortunately we have no photographic record of Ernest's involvement at this stage, but without his intervention, our unique heritage would have long since disappeared, and thousands of visitors would have been deprived of the evocative experience of our operational Victorian mill.



**For many years the mill was operated by NWWA then United Utilities, who did a fine job of promoting visits by the general public and schools groups. In 2009, UU were obliged to terminate their subsidy of the mill, and it was again closed down and left with no plans for the future.**

**Enter again Ernest Croley - he formed an Action group which led to the creation of a charitable trust, the Bunbury Watermill Trust, and negotiated to buy the mill and grounds from UU and assemble a team of volunteers to manage, maintain and operate the mill. A mind-boggling undertaking, but undaunted, Ernest led the team that re-opened the mill in 2012. We are proud that since then over 6,000 people have enjoyed and learned from their step back into the environment of a working 19th century corn mill.**



Ernest's newly formed  
Action Group 2010



Ernest accepts a cheque from  
Stephen O'Brien MP

**Ernest played many roles in the volunteer force - he was the founder and until recently Chairman of the Bunbury Watermill Trust, he was active in maintenance work around the mill, a relentless fund raiser, a well informed and genial tour guide, active in publicising the mill, and above all leading and coordinating the many diverse activities required of the mill team to ensure the continuation of the mill's active existence.**

**Quite simply - but for Ernest, there would no longer be a Bunbury Mill. TWICE! We mourn Ernest's passing, we remember with affection his work at the mill, and we resolve to continue his work in preserving Bunbury Mill as a cultural heritage for the foreseeable future in his memory.**



Ernest promoting the mill at the Cheshire Show, June 2013



Sharing a social occasion with friends at the mill, March 2015



Ernest retires as Chairman of the Trust in November 2014.

He remains active in mill affairs into 2016.



March 2016 - Ernest comes to inspect our refurbished Bamford grinding mill (possibly his last visit to Bunbury mill)

**Thank you Ernest!**