



# TIMS E-NEWS

## The International Molinological Society

Fall/ Winter 2020

Issue 29

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### INTRO BY OUR PRESIDENT

Dear TIMS Members and Mill Friends,

I am pleased that, in a world where coronavirus is dominating the news, our E-News Team has managed to present another issue of E-News. It is a bit more compact than normal and the "Book Corner" is missing this time, but we do have news articles from several countries and the announcement of a film project on Lower Saxony mills.

Don't miss, for instance, the article from Romania, where volunteers and community workers are restoring watermills; four have been done, and more are in the pipeline.

From Portugal, we have included a short report of the National Meeting on Molinology, organized by Etnoideia in November 2019.

Due to coronavirus, almost all activities announced in the Spring 2020 issue of E-News had to be cancelled. The exhibition that was planned in Belgium has been postponed until 2021.

On the other hand, coronavirus caused a strong increase of sales of flour ground by traditional wind- and watermills. Several mills were even put back in operation. But that was not the only consequence. In this issue there is an account of a remarkable initiative during the lockdown in Italy. On behalf of the TIMS E-News team, I would like to thank all who contributed.

On our website, we have activated the new International Mill Database. Just click on "[Mill Database](#)", and discover a completely new user interface. Do you want to contribute? Just get in touch with Leo van der Drift, e-mail [lvddrift@telfort.nl](mailto:lvddrift@telfort.nl).

Due to coronavirus many of us suddenly have a lot of time available. So, why not write the article you had planned to write already a long time ago. Leo (for E-News) and Graham (for International Molinology) would certainly welcome your contribution.

Not a member of TIMS yet? Well, it is easy to enroll, just complete [the online application form](#).....

Enjoy reading E-News !!

Willem van Bergen  
e-mail: [wdvb@gmx.de](mailto:wdvb@gmx.de)

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The "Lieser Mühle" at the Salzburg open air museum in Austria, photographed in pre-coronavirus times.



# WORLD NEWS

## ROMANIA

**Preservation of Watermills in Banat, Romania**, by Radu Trifan, president of Asociația Acasă în Banat.

### Our activities

Asociația Acasă în Banat, an NGO active in western Romania's Banat region, is restoring 10 watermills this year with financial help from the Orange Foundation. The Save the Watermills project is aimed at fixing derelict watermills that are still functioning or have functioned until recently and to make them more attractive and accessible to tourists. Each restoration is conceived as an event bringing lots of volunteers and community members, who work for two days to achieve this goal. The first such event took place between 17th-19th July in Gernik, an ethnic Czech village in the Danube Gorges Area of Romania. Over 60 volunteers worked on the restoration of four watermills,



managing to change two roofs, restore a stone foundation, dig a water channel, build tourist paths and much more. All four mills are now included in a tourist trail. A second event will take place between 21st-23rd August in Șopotu Vechi, where 11 mills still exist. Four of these will be fixed and improved, using only traditional materials and techniques.

The third event is taking place in Pârvoava this Autumn and will aim to restore the functionality of two wooden watermills and rebuild a broken waterway. We prepared a photographic impression of our activities for you.



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## Who are we?

Asociația Acasă în Banat - literally meaning, "at home in the Banat" (an historical region of western Romania), is one of the youngest organisations to join TIMS. The NGO started an ambitious long-term project to promote and restore the forgotten watermills in the Banat region of Romania. Last year it made a census of the watermills in the area, counting no less than 243 installations of various types and conservation status. Since then that number has risen to over 250. The results were published in a small booklet called; Land of Watermills.



A Guide to the Watermills in the Banat Mountains. The publication is available to donors, on request. In February 2020, a team of volunteers made the first successful restoration of a small mill in Sasca Montană.





More about us on [www.acasainbanat.ro](http://www.acasainbanat.ro),  
[www.taramorilordeapa.ro](http://www.taramorilordeapa.ro), [fb.com/acasainbanat](https://fb.com/acasainbanat), [fb.com/taramorilordeapa](https://fb.com/taramorilordeapa)



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If you want to support our work, you can make a donation to Asociația Acasă în Banat here:

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SWIFT/BIC: BTRLRO22

PayPal: [acasainbanat@gmail.com](mailto:acasainbanat@gmail.com)

Revolut: +40748918091

### Publication

**Land of Watermills.** A Guide to the Watermills in the Banat Mountains.

This small booklet presents the results of a census made by Asociația Acasă în Banat between August-December 2019, in the Banat region of Romania. After travelling for over 10.000 km and reaching over 150 villages, the team that worked on the census found 243 existing installations and catalogued and photographed each of them. The results are published in a very accessible manner and the work is split into micro-regional units, highlighting some of the most important destinations: Rudăria, Cornereva, Sichevița, Topleț. The work is published in Romanian, is richly coloured and has 20 pages. Available to donors, on request ([www.taramorilordeapa.ro](http://www.taramorilordeapa.ro))

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## ITALY

### **Milling Together (#mulinINSIEME):**

**Online Interviews about Italian Mills**, by *Marica Grano*

( [mariacarmelagrano@gmail.com](mailto:mariacarmelagrano@gmail.com) )

During the Covid - 19 lockdown people kept in touch and exchanged ideas using the Internet even more than before! In Italy we activated a live facebook format, in which we discussed different possibilities for making the most of historic mills:



<https://www.facebook.com/AssociazioneItalianaAmiciDeiMuliniStorici/>.

*Photograph: AIAMS, Piemonte and Valle d'Aosta section (picture from Facebook).*

We met online every Saturday morning for 10 weeks, to deal with

different topics and talked to guests from all over Italy: millers, architects, archaeologists, historians, conservators, cultural designers, volunteers from the Italian association AIAMS and officials from the Italian Ministry for the Protection of Cultural Heritage MIBACT. We dealt with various issues, from the restoration of machinery and the recovery of practices and traditions, up to the possibility of using mills for the conversion of energy. During the live broadcasts it was possible to interject with comments, questions and proposals and to actively participate in the discussion.

The President of AIAMS, Gabriele Setti, and the secretary Silvano Bonaiuti outlined the perspectives towards which the association will orient itself in the next 10 years; most importantly the realisation of a digital library.

During the online meetings we looked at the history and engineering of mills and analysed different ways of making the most of water mills in the following Italian regions: Basilicata, Calabria, Emilia Romagna, Liguria, Lombardy, Piedmont, Sardinia and Tuscany; and windmills in the salt pans in Umbria and Sicily.

We met some young millers who, from North to South Italy, have chosen to stone-grind Italian cereals from local sources. This sector has not suffered the post-covid crisis: in fact there was a great demand for quality flour during lockdown. These mills, in addition to producing flour, offer guided tours and tastings to tourists.

Two meetings were entirely devoted to the contribution of AIAMS members, to compensate for the traditional visit to mills on the occasion of the Italian Mill Day, which was, of course, cancelled. Here in Italy the Mills Open Day was scheduled for May 16th, why don't we think about having a World Mill Day?

The members of the Piedmont region in northern Italy offered an in-depth look at the Ecomuseums which safeguard some mills in the region and published videos filmed by AIAMS member mills on their Facebook page ([link](#)).

The Basilicata region, in southern Italy, made a mini-documentary on horizontal watermills with drop towers (based on my PhD research on the characteristics of the towers and leats), with videos made by the Lucanian AIAMS members:

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bo6Z4a1DfSM>.

All 10 events can be reviewed on the AIAMS association page, on Facebook and Youtube: [https://www.youtube.com/results?search\\_query=aiams](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=aiams). We are thinking about translating at least the subtitles into English ... are any volunteers interested in helping us?

## PORTUGAL

### **Fifth Portuguese National Meeting on Molinology, by Miguel Brito Correia.**

The enthusiasts of wind, water and tidemills got together in Montijo (south of Lisbon) on 9th November 2019 for another National Meeting on Molinology, organised by Etnoideia, which is driven by the untiring Jorge Augusto Miranda, founder of the Portuguese Section of TIMS.

After the introductory speeches, the eighty participants watched

a short video about mills in Montijo and went on to hear seven papers on various subjects connected to molinology. Lunchtime is always the occasion for networking, being with friends and buying the publications on sale. The afternoon had two parallel sessions, one about projects for the revitalization of mills or mill-related territories, and the other session was the presentation of thirteen papers. The session on projects is also a way to strengthen the bonds between the members of the Portuguese Mills Network, which is an informal group of mill owners and other stakeholders dedicated to keeping all kinds of grinding places and equipment in a good state of repair and open to the public.

The day ended at the Cais tidemill (see picture) which was rehabilitated in 2005 and has four pairs of grindstones. On Sunday 10th November the participants went on a day-tour to visit three mills in Montijo: a tide, a wind and a tower mill we call "American metallic mill", and one vertical wheeled



*Moinho do Cais tide mill at Montijo, south of Lisbon*

watermill and four windmills in the Oeste Region just north of Lisbon (one was totally built of timber and another was used for the commercial production of flour). The tour lasted 13 hours and covered 350km by bus.

Previous National Meetings took place in Ponte de Sor (17th and 18th June 2017), Albergaria-a-Velha (7th and 8th November 2015), Boticas (18th to 20th October 2002) and Montijo (13th to 15th October 2000). All photographs by the author.

*Moinho das Boisias near Alvorninha, visited on the day tour and one of the very few smock mills left in Portugal.*



*Participants of the 5th National Meeting assembled at the conference facility in Montijo; note the special banner!*

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## SOUTH AFRICA

**Mostert's Mill Braking Problems, Cape Town, South Africa, by Andy Selfe, millwright.**

The problem is poor braking action because the diameter of the Brake Wheel is too small for the radius of the ring of brake blocks, leaving point contact top and bottom only:

We plan to line the brake wheel with a layer (or layers) of wood, steamed first and bent to the curve required. But first we must make sure that the wheel is running as true as possible, by adjusting with wedges. Then we need to machine the existing surface, taking as little material as possible off, leaving the maximum surface area.

For this, I have made a mobile 'lathe', which will be clamped to the shear, with the 'bedway' at the same angle as the tilt of the wind-shaft, in this case, 10 degrees.



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The light green assembly is the 'carriage' of the 'lathe', and here below is the completed 'bedway' all set up at 10 degrees, with its clamps to fix it to the shear.



We left the very heavy carriage up in the mill last week. The threaded rod at the top end will move the carriage along the bedway with a crank-handle at the end. After we have added the strips of wood to the wheel it will need machining again.

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At the moment we are trying to find a source of thin oak planks and someone who knows how to steam them. In the meantime, they plan to mill this coming Saturday as usual.

I am waiting for the go-ahead from the Committee of Friends of Mostert's Mill. Here is a short clip of her running last week [June 2020]:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-9J7FrCRjjA>

I will keep you informed as we go along!

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## USA

### **A Rosy-Faced, Spirited Game**, by Amy Boyce, Husk Preservation, Inc.

Over pizza and beers, during the 2019 Fall, Mid-Atlantic Chapter SPOOM Meeting, a miller friend reminisced on a windmill drinking game played during her bachelorette party. The game rules are something like, you must keep drinking for the duration that someone blows on a pinwheel. Pinwheels remind me of grade school, folding over heavy-duty paper into a little fan and fastening a pin-like grommet as a bearing.

I found her story particularly delightful because I had just seen a version of this at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. A top a ca. 1570 glass goblet is the most intricate, silver post mill ca. 1800. According to the museum's description, drinking games were popular in the 16th century in many European countries.

Objects such as this were made to encourage social drinking.

Objects such as this were made to encourage social drinking.

*Glass goblet with silver post mill, back view (© Victoria and Albert Museum, London).*



*Glass goblet with silver post mill, front view (© Victoria and Albert Museum, London)*



It is activated by blowing a whistle, causing the clock and windmill sails to turn. The person drinking would be required to drink the entire contents before the turning stopped. Failure to complete this would have resulted in repeated drinking.

It's believed that the windmill mount replaced an earlier mount. The Mill-glass was probably made in the Netherlands. For more information on size, and inscriptions visit <https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O4711/mill-glass-unknown/>.

The object is part of the Wilfred Buckley Collection, Museum Number: C.416-1936.

## RUSSIA

### **Russian Watermills**

TIMS member Ton Meesters sent us the accompanying ca. 1900 postcard of a watermill at "Strelna, in the park".

Strelna is a town near Saint Petersburg in Russia, on the Gulf of Finland. The "park" is Constantine Park, consisting of a big baroque palace built around 1720 in a symmetrical French garden looking out directly on to the Gulf of Finland, and surrounded by an English landscape garden.

*Watermill at Constantine Park in Strelna near Saint Petersburg, Russia. Postcard ca. 1900, coll. Ton Meesters*



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The watermill was situated in this last part, in the western part of the estate. The (estimated) coordinates of the mill were 59.856055, 30.052980. At a closer look, the architecture is quite special, and the mill's woodwork is finely decorated. It does not look like an ordinary mill. Instead, the resemblance with, for instance, the watermill cottage built for Marie-Antoinette in the garden of Versailles Palace near Paris arises. Could this watermill at Strelna also be a folly?

If any of our readers could tell us more about the watermill at Constantine Park in Strelna we would be very pleased to hear from them.

Your reaction is awaited by the editor at [lvddrift@telfort.nl](mailto:lvddrift@telfort.nl)

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Quite separately, we found that in 2014 a watermill was restored in the south of Russia.

The mill is located in Kursk oblast, near the town of Oboyan.

There are several YouTube videos on the Internet that testify of this event:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ecrWbPzVNTk> (with turning waterwheel)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=diwFrFBhmJY>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2jMTvVFp4nY>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fnih9r3XFk8>

## William Hill's Internet Links

For a large number of years, William Hill has treated us with lots of mill related internet links that he has collected while searching the web.

William has now started to post his links on two special Facebook group pages called [Windmill Hoppers & Watermill Hoppers](#).

We will no longer include

William's links in the E News but

here are two examples to encourage you to check out the Facebook groups. Make sure to visit them regularly, as William will keep posting new links. Watermills in Slovenia

<https://www.total-slovenia-news.com/lifestyle/6553-cultural-heritage-of-slovenia-water-mills>

Prince Edward Island, Canada

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/prince-edward-island/pei-biscuits-flour-dutch-thompson-1.5635493>

Facebook Groups:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/windmillhoppers/> (windmills). This is a public group and anybody can see the posts but to search for specific posts, such as William's, you must have a Facebook account and join the group.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/427712580580461/> (watermills). This is a closed group and so one must have a Facebook account in order to look at the posts, as well as join the group.



*Corn and saw mill at Slovenj Gradec, one of the mills featured in the "Watermills in Slovenia" weblink (photo Leo van der Drift, August 2013)*

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## ASIA

Here are links to two interesting articles with excellent photographs.

### **Traditional Rice Noodle Making in Indonesia**

This one is about traditional rice noodle making in Indonesia, using animal power!

The noodle factory is in the village of Bendo, near Kutoarjo (W of Yogyakarta, on the island of Java).

<https://roadsandkingdoms.com/2016/how-the-noodle-gets-made/>

### **Irrigation Wheels in Vietnam**

This is about a group of 25 bamboo waterwheels or norias, used to irrigate the surrounding fields in Vietnam. They are built each year after the rainy season and are dismantled and stored before the rains start again.

They are in the village of Na Khuong near Ban Bo, in Lai Châu province (NW of Hanoi, near the Chinese border)

<https://vietnam.vnanet.vn/english/water-wheels-in-na-khuong/331937.html>

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## GERMANY

### **Lower Saxony Film Project, Germany**

Dear Mill Friends,

Our film project on the mills in Lower Saxony is now available on USB stick at 29 EUR (postage, without track & trace, is an additional 4 EUR for most countries; with track & trace postage comes to 8 EUR).

It includes 7 hours and 42 minutes of footage from over 180 Lower Saxonian mills, along with some special technical machines such as forge hammers and mining chain pumps in the Harz mountains.



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These are individual film sequences that can be viewed on the computer but it is also possible to view the films from a map in your browser. Furthermore, you can also use the stick directly on modern plug-in TVs without additional hardware.

In addition, there is extensive bonus material, such as the use of water power and wind power, compound feed production, decaying mills and a side-by-side comparison of many mills then and now using Super 8 material, some of which is over 40 years old.



A special highlight is the sequence “From Grain to Flour”. In this, almost 30 minutes sequence, the process of the grain harvest, through cleaning and grinding to sifting, is clearly explained, supported by numerous 3D animations. The spoken text is in German.

Further information on the project and short videos can be found here:

<https://www.muehlenromantik.eu/index.php/filmprojekt>

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<https://www.muehlenromantik.eu/index.php/filmprojekt/2-uncategorised/12-vorwort-yt>

<https://www.muehlenromantik.eu/index.php/filmprojekt/2-uncategorised/10-trailer-yt>

<https://www.muehlenromantik.eu/index.php/muehlensterben>

Kind regards,  
Ansgar Rahmacher  
Rahmacher-Media  
Elsaßstraße 13  
D-44793 Bochum  
Germany

<http://www.rahmacher-media.de/>

Orders can be sent to:

[info@rahmacher-media.de](mailto:info@rahmacher-media.de)

## 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, please send it to the editor, Leo van der Drift, [lvddrift@telfort.nl](mailto:lvddrift@telfort.nl). This Newsletter cannot exist without you! The next issue, No 30 is scheduled for March 2021.

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