

William Niall Thomas Roberts - Niall Roberts - was an enthusiastic member of SPAB, TIMS, and the International Molinologist Society. He greatly enjoyed the various trips to molinological destinations, both at home and on the continent, some of which (his family believe) he co-ordinated.

Visits to sugar mills in the West Indies and in the United States featured among Niall's overseas excursions in the 1990s, as well as a mills trip to Eastern Europe in 1997. He was keen to urge his sons and daughters (also avid travellers) to include wind and water mills on their itineraries as well.

His publications included: (***Mills Archive Trust to complete, this please***).

Niall was born in Harrow, on 16th February 1922. He attended St Ignatius College until he was 14 and went on to Mount Saint Mary's (a Jesuit boarding school) from the age of 14 - 16.

On leaving school he was employed as an Executive Officer in the Civil Service, but left to gain a degree in economics from the London School of Economics (LSE), in order to further his career. This enabled him to undertake statistical work with the Ministry of Agriculture and two postings through OECD to Paris for a total spell of some 7 years (1956 - 1960 and 1965 - 1968), accompanied by his young family.

Prior to taking early retirement in 1980, he was employed as a Chief Statistician within the Overseas Development Administration (ODA). Niall subsequently worked as an energy consultant to the Department of Energy; this work taking him to Asia and the Pacific, amongst other foreign lands, where he was able to indulge his interest in more exotic mills, including those grinding sugar.

His first interest in mills was Wimbledon Windmill, when in his 20s (Niall & Julie lived either side of the mill, before they were married). A more serious molinological interest developed in the 1970s. More recently, Niall and Julie spent about six years on duty at Wimbledon Windmill, where Julie greeted visitors, whilst Niall enthusiastically demonstrated the workings of the mill to young and old alike. Julie was also in charge of coordinating the volunteers rota.

Besides his love of France, Niall always enjoyed a good English cream tea and yummy cake, visiting National Trust properties, cats, and of course wind and water mills.

Prospective husbands were always asked the following three questions:

- (1) Do you like cats?,
- (2) Do you like chocolate cake? and
- (3) Do you like ***windmills***?

Any negative response generally sent the poor chap packing!

Niall died on 13th May 2010. He is survived by his wife, Julie, his sons: Anthony and Jonathan, and his daughters: Anne and Margaret.