



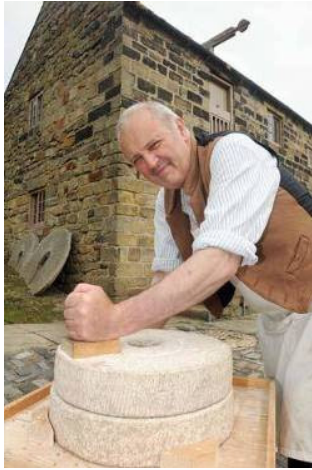
Raindale Watermill stood at the foot of the secluded Raindale Valley on the North Yorkshire moors. Originally built as a cottage, the waterwheel and mechanism were added around 1800 and like many mills in North Yorkshire it then provided for purely small scale local needs, grinding wheat into flour for human consumption, and oats and barley into meal to feed livestock. The mill became redundant in 1915 and in 1935 it was offered to York Castle Museum. The mill was carefully taken apart and reconstructed on its present site, behind the museum on the banks of the River Foss, opening to the public for the first time in 1966. The mill ground wheat quite regularly at the museum but the mechanism deteriorated and stopped working around 2005.



We reopened the mill to visitors in 2009 with our mill volunteers enabling visitors to access the building and learn about its history and the history of milling in the area. In 2011 we restored the waterwheel and mill mechanism to working order again and the outside area around the mill has undergone extensive landscaping and improvement. We no longer grind corn, so the mechanism operates with the grinding stones disengaged but the waterwheel turns, fed by a pond which draws water from the river.

The volunteer role involves meeting and greeting the visitors, showing them around and explaining how the mill worked, what its origins are and how it came to be at the Castle Museum etc. We have a small demonstration set of quern stones for visitors to have a go at grinding corn for themselves, as well as a small handling collection of milling and agricultural objects for visitors to use.





Training

We provide object handling and customer care training to ensure that volunteers have access to all the information that they need to undertake the role. New volunteers shadow experienced volunteers until they are confident enough to take an active part in the mill sessions. Volunteers also have the opportunity to be trained to operate the mill mechanism if they wish.

In addition, we have a bread making activity as part of the Castle Kitchen project which runs in the Castle Museum itself, and links very well to the mill project. It is a useful addition to the mill volunteer role, and training is available for volunteers who wish to do it in addition to their regular mill volunteering. Volunteers who wish to make bread will complete an online food hygiene course.

Time Commitment

This is probably our most flexible project in relation to the time commitment that it requires. The mill can be opened any time from around 10:30am to 4:30pm (3.30pm during winter) 7 days a week. Once volunteers are confident with opening and closing procedures and are comfortable with the role, they can open the mill whenever they have some free time to come in; this can be anything from a couple of hours to a full day.

Other essential information

As a charity, we do not have a budget for travel expenses or meal allowances, so unfortunately we are unable to reimburse travel or subsistence costs incurred by volunteers in the course of their day to day volunteering.

Volunteers are asked to wear YMT volunteer t shirts and sweatshirts so that visitors can easily identify them as being the people in the know!