

ROUNABOUT
RINGWOOD & FORDINGBRIDGE

NOW and THEN

Frampton's Mill, Ringwood.

Frampton's Mill in 1990



The area around Frampton's Mill was for centuries the yard of one of Ringwood's many breweries until it was bought out by Strongs of Romsey and closed in 1893. The site was then acquired by local grocers Frampton & Sons, who used the premises to set up a second business as an agricultural supplier. The offices for this business were in the buildings now occupied by Grants of Ringwood estate agency.

In the early 20th century Mr Bill Frampton and his relations ran both the seed-merchants in the High Street and Frampton's Yard. His family lived in Lynton House, Star Lane, now offices of the Swaythling Housing Association. According to Bill's granddaughter Elvie, Frampton's Mill was built by her father Alec Frampton in about 1913 to store corn and seed and to

grind animal feed. It was originally powered by gas, though in later years it converted to electricity. Grinding and crushing machinery was connected to the generator by a rather 'Heath Robinson' system of shafts.

On Market day, Frampton's Yard bustled with farmers, smallholders and local characters. It had a timeless atmosphere reminiscent of a novel by Thomas Hardy – Michael Henchard, the Mayor of Casterbridge, would no doubt have felt at home there!

The yard finally closed in 1989, by which time ownership of the business had passed out of the Frampton family. The yard became part of the new Furlong Shopping Centre. Many of the buildings were demolished,

but happily Frampton's Mill has been retained as a restaurant and wine-bar.



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