

Warwick Castle Engine House

The Warwick Castle Engine House has featured in WIAS talks a number of times in recent years. If you haven't been to see it yet it is well worth a visit. The original mill on the site was founded in 1398 and over £2 million has been invested in restoring this feature of the castle. A few shots around the Engine House appear below but go inside and have a look at the equipment and story boards that reveal the complete history of how electricity was brought to Warwick Castle.

'For nearly 600 years the Mill and Engine House used the power of the River Avon to grind grain. A century ago that same 'hydro' power was harnessed by the Castle's engine house to generate electricity for the household. Now the Mill and Engine House has been carefully restored so you can see how electricity arrived at the Castle in 1900 and how the Castle shot to the forefront of Victorian technology. Discover how the development of electricity excited the Castle and changed the life of those above and below stairs.

The Earl and Countess of Warwick were great innovators of their time and wanted the prestige and luxury that the installation of generating equipment would bring. In 1894 the generating plant was installed in the Mill and Engine House and the Castle was wired up. In December 1894 the work was completed and 475 bulbs were lit to the delight of Countess Daisy as it coincided with her birthday. By modern standards the lights would not have been very bright but those who saw them thought them wonderful!

In the Mill and Engine House you can also find out about the responsibility of the Mill Engineer and how day after day, year after year he tended the generating system and kept it running. See into the Mill Engineer's office and discover how the generating system was maintained to ensure the supply of electricity to the Castle was constant. So much of the original generating system has been successfully repaired and replaced that the Mill and Engine House can now generate enough electricity to keep the attraction running.'

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