

A photograph of the Grands Moulins Pantin building, a modern glass-fronted structure with a prominent brick clock tower. The building is set against a clear blue sky. The glass facade reflects the surrounding environment and has some interior lights visible. The brick tower features a clock face and a small window near the top.

Grands Moulins
PANTIN



BNP PARIBAS

The bank for a changing world

GRANDS MOULINS

Monumental icon of the industrial heritage of north-eastern Paris, Grands Moulins de Pantin (Pantin flour mills) ceased milling activities in July 2003. At the end of 2009, following three years of heavy work, a new life opened up for Pantin mills when BNP Paribas Securities Services 3,200 staff employees moved in from six different buildings in Paris.



Grands Moulins and Canal de l'Ourcq in the years 1920-1930

94_PANTIN_Le Canal de l'Ourcq
Les Moulins

GRANDS MOULINS

BNP Paribas Securities Services, a wholly-owned subsidiary of BNP Paribas Group, is a leading global custodian and securities services provider to all participants in the investment cycle including the buy-side, sell-side, corporates and issuers.

In the past, Pantin area was well-known for **the old Roman road leading to Germany** which ran through it and its lush countryside with market gardens and farmland. **On April 5 1880, Abel Stanislas Leblanc, a miller of the Brie region**, bought a plot of land and built a mill which started up in 1882. At this time the town of Pantin had many advantages: it was close to the Parisian markets and enjoyed convenient transport facilities with Canal de l'Ourcq and Paris-Strasbourg railway. There was also a large pool of labour locally.

Grands Moulins de Pantin changed of ownership several times because of the concentration of the milling business after World War I. Eventually, **they were taken over by Grands Moulins de Strasbourg (Strasbourg Mills) in 1921.**



Grands Moulins and Canal de l'Ourcq today

GRANDS MOULINS



The new mill project. Eugene Haug's elevation drawing, 1923

GRANDS MOULINS

From 1923 onwards, construction of what has become emblematic buildings began under the direction of **Alsacian architect Eugène Haug**. These include the mill, the grain silo, the 47 metre high water tower shaped like a belfry, and the boiler room equipped with **a powerful Babcock & Wilcox boiler** which generated electricity for the mill. The transporter bridge, one of the most inventive elements of the mill, is designed and built to

load the sacks of flour onto barges. This project, which was a huge undertaking for its time, is firmly rooted in **the neo-regional architecture style**. The skeleton is made of reinforced concrete and the masonry is of pale brickwork, with sloping lofts. Later on, in 1930, a quay is added and year 1933 sees the construction of the bakery together with its own laboratory and school.



Babcock & Wilcox boiler

GRANDS MOULINS



Haug's brick façades vs Reichen & Robert Associés' glass walls

During World War II, on **19 August 1944**, a bomb blows up in a barge sailing on Canal de l'Ourcq, stopping all activity at the mill until 1948. Parisian architect Léon Bailly is given the job of reconstructing the mill which quickly becomes a model of modern industry, achieving outstanding results, including high levels of exports.

During the two decades from 1970 to 1990, growing competition and falling consumption of bread in France led the mill to start up a new venture in industrial bakery. But these changes proved inadequate to save the business. In 1994, **Soufflet Group**, one of the major cereal traders in France, took over Grands Moulins, thus becoming the top flour-milling company in France. However, the new owners were unable to halt the decline and **Pantin mills finally closed down in July 2003**.

In 2001, Soufflet Group joined with Pantin local authorities in a bid to ensure a future for this site which was so steeped in history. As a result, **architectural office Reichen & Robert Associés**, which specialises in converting industrial sites, was commissioned to refurbish Grands Moulins de Pantin and their one and a half hectare (3.7 acres) site.

The renovation was designed to the highest technical specifications. The architects were able to preserve the famous Grands Moulins silhouette, including the walkways and the transporter bridge, while still creating **50,000 m² of office space for BNP Paribas Securities Services**. The imposing Babcock & Wilcox boiler, together

GRANDS MOULINS

with its gauges, has been restored to its former glory. The internal courtyard was restored exactly as it was before with its original cobblestones and rails.

This successful large-scale conversion of a former industrial site into a service-sector complex has received a **HQE – Haute Qualité Environnementale – certificate**, attesting to its high environmental quality. A project was also set up to involve staff in the development process, taking a **“campus”-style** approach. In fact it was one of the employees who suggested the theme of the five continents for naming the five buildings. Europe, Asia, Oceania, Africa and America buildings thus came into existence, each decorated in an appropriate manner.

The arrival of BNP Paribas Securities Services global business line in the heart of the town of Pantin has significantly boosted the already substantial BNP Paribas presence in the Seine-Saint-Denis department, a suburb on the outskirts of north-eastern Paris. BNP Paribas has now become **the number one employer in the département** and has taken steps to further develop partnerships with local authorities, charity organisations and social economy enterprises. This commitment to corporate social responsibility can be clearly seen in initiatives such as **Projet Banlieues** – a project to foster development in underprivileged neighbourhoods which has been sponsored by BNP Paribas Foundation and the Bank’s Retail branch network since 2006.



Lobby of one of the five buildings. Designer: Didier Gomez



BNP Paribas Group Heritage & Historical Archives • Printed on paper sourced from sustainable forests • 2016
Cover photo: canal de l'Ouche (front view (Adeline Bommart)) • Back photo: detail from a flour sack (Archives Municipales de Pantin)
Photos p. 3, 5 and 7: Adeline Bommart • Photos p. 2 and 4: Archives Municipales de Pantin



BNP PARIBAS

The bank for a changing world