

Milling About

News from the Friends of Peirce Mill

Summer 2014



Orchard Rising

Casey Trees, the Washington non-profit that is restoring the capital's tree canopy, selected the Friends of Peirce Mill to benefit from its Community Tree Planting program. Casey will donate about two dozen fruit trees (apple and pear) to complete the demonstration historic orchard behind the barn, and another two dozen native trees to begin the restoration of the wooded areas further up the hill.

The orchard is a small re-creation of the extensive fruit growing and nursery operations of the Peirces. As early as 1814, the family advertised in Washington newspapers that it had 20,000 apple trees for sale. Linnaean Hill, the nursery founded by Joshua Peirce (1795–1869), was a major supplier of plants to landscapers in the city's early days. When completed, FOPM will use the orchard for interpretation of the Peirce Plantation and the history of American hard cider.

The woods restoration behind the orchard is part of an ongoing effort by park partners such as the Friends to reverse the decline of the native tree canopy. The National Park Service has completed several years of herbicide treatment and mechanical clearing of invasive shrubs like the thick, thorny Multiflora Rose that were no doubt planted by the Peirces as "living fences" to keep livestock penned up.

Casey will recruit volunteers to do the planting, install deer guards and follow up with watering over the next two years to make sure the trees survive. The event will be held on the morning of Saturday, October 18. Casey has this program down to a science, and all the trees should be planted by noon. Come down and watch. And thanks to Casey Trees!



Saturdays at the Mill

We've intensified efforts to attract visitors on the second and fourth Saturdays (when the mill grinds corn) by increasing publicity and scheduling special events. A big thanks to mill volunteer Deborah Dougherty (wife of FOPM president Quentin Looney), who emailed announcements to just about every listserve in Northwest DC. On June 14 and June 28 we had attendance of about 230 each day, topping most other days' numbers. Total June visitation was about 1,300.

Among the summer's events:

- Restoration carpenter Steve Ortado reprised his glass glazing class under a tent in front of the mill.
- The Red Hook Lobster Pound food truck served lunch to mill visitors, bikers, runners, and others in the picnic area.
- A local bluegrass duo performed.
- Educator Sandy Burk talked about fish and migration in Rock Creek, pointing to several species displayed in a fish tank (the fish were supplied by the DC's Fish and Wildlife Service).

We also lured more young visitors by putting out the various mill toys and games in front of the barn, while a Park Service intern taught youngsters how to make cornhusk dolls.



www.peircemill-friends.org

The Friends of Peirce Mill, Inc., is a non-profit organization incorporated in the District of Columbia. It has been recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization.



Kneading Through Maine

By Steve Dryden, FOPM Program Manager

Due to a happy scheduling confluence, I was able to attend the eighth annual Kneading Conference, sponsored by the Maine Grain Alliance in Skowhegan, Maine, on July 24-25.

To knead or not to knead was never a question at the event, where dozens of millers, bakers, chefs, and hearty bread aficionados from New England and elsewhere gathered on the state fairgrounds to learn and load up on carbs. Einkorn, spelt, and emmer were among the exotic grains used by the bakers, most of whom employed portable wood-fired ovens. In the DIY (do it yourself) tradition of the event, one workshop featured the fabrication of earthen, igloo-shaped ovens, which were then sold to the highest bidder.



The conference organizers are part of a movement to revive wheat production and a market for local grain products in Maine. They note that Somerset County, the site of the event, raised enough wheat to feed over 100,000 people annually until the middle of the 19th century. Today, only about one percent of wheat consumed in Maine is grown in-state.

IN MEMORY OF TED HAZEN

1949 - 2013



Theodore Roosevelt “Ted” Hazen, former miller at Peirce Mill, died of cancer in December 2013 at the age of 64. Ted was employed by the National Park Service at Peirce Mill from 1984 until 1995. He became a good friend of mine when I worked at the mill as a volunteer “miller’s helper”, beginning in 1988. The mill ground regularly on weekends, and occasionally during the week for school groups.

My job was to turn on the valve that fed water to the headrace. Then when the millstones were turning, I would go down to the basement and begin filling the two and four-pound cloth bags of flour as it came off the stones and the vibrating sifter. I remember Ted showing me over and over how to knot the twine used to close the bags. I could never do it in one quick motion like Ted did! We sold our stone-ground unbleached white and whole wheat flour to mill visitors and it was always a popular item.

Ted and I made a number of trips to visit water mills in Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina. Once he had a surprise for me when we arrived at a mill in Milford, Delaware and he proudly showed me the sign: “Abbott’s Mill”.

Ted had many talents beyond simply operating the mill. He always had a project going, rebuilding or repairing some piece of machinery. His skills as a millwright got the wheels turning again in 1984 after they’d been idle for almost five years. He developed interpretive programs for visitors that were very popular, and was especially fond of teaching children.

Ted’s artistic talents can be seen in the intricate cutaway drawing he did of Peirce Mill. A large, full-color version of this drawing is on the wall to your left after you enter the mill’s first floor. Ted created and maintained a unique website called Pond Lilly Restorations (www.angelfire.com), which is still up and running, that contains an amazing amount of information on the history and technology of grist mills. The website also has an account of his lifetime of operating and restoring water mills, going back to his youth when both his father and grandfather had been employed at grist mills in Pennsylvania, where Ted grew up. My memories of Peirce Mill are closely linked to my friendship with Ted Hazen.

–Richard Abbott

FOPM founder and president, 1997-2011

Goodbye and Hello

Sheila Ploger, who has served as FOPM secretary-treasurer and membership chair since the group was founded, is planning a move to her home state of Ohio. Sheila resigned from her positions effective July 1, though she's staying on the board for the time being. The Friends wish to thank her deeply for the conscientious service she's given to the organization through all the ups and downs. It almost goes without saying that we could not have restored the mill without her sharp eye on the numbers, check writing, monitoring of membership, and detailed reports on board proceedings. Best wishes Sheila!!

We also are welcoming a new board member, **John DeFerrari**, who is no doubt familiar to those of you who are Washington history buffs. John is one of the "deans" of our city's history, publishing the Streets of Washington blog, and is the author of *Historic Restaurants of Washington DC*, and *Lost Washington DC*. He's a trustee of the DC Preservation League, and—just by coincidence—recently moved to Pierce Mill Rd. in Mt. Pleasant, a few doors away from FOPM president Quentin Looney.



Tish Kilpatrick is rotating off the board to become FOPM's volunteer coordinator. Thanks, Tish, for taking on this important job!

Bus Money

FOPM has been awarded \$8,000 from the National Park Foundation's "Ticket To Ride" program to pay for bus transportation for DC students to visit the mill. This fall, the money will allow us to bring young people from two schools for the first time: Bridges Public Charter School (in Petworth), and the Latin American Bilingual Public Charter School (a Montessori school with campuses in Brightwood and on South Dakota Ave NE).

Last spring, we had visits from four public elementary schools: Lafayette, Eaton, Bancroft and Stoddert.

Reminder: There's an App for That...

The official Peirce Mill "app" tour can now be accessed on your smart phone browser by typing in: peircemill.tour-sphere.com. This application (also known as a mobile website) is the first of its kind in Rock Creek Park, and allows visitors to learn about the mill and its history, even when the building is closed. It can also inform passers-by who might not have known of the mill's existence and its recently-completed restoration.

FOPM received a grant from the National Trust for Historic Preservation to pay for the design and online presence of the app. The mobile website also has pages describing the native plant garden renovated by FOPM with water sustainability features at the Rock Creek Nature Center.

Cloverdale Tour



On April 26, we had the first-ever inside tour of Cloverdale, the 19th century Peirce family home on Tilden St. The visit was arranged by the Chinese Embassy, which maintains its student exchange program offices in the gleaming white mansion. The Chinese government bought the building in 2000, a few years after the Cammack family, descendants of the Peirces, decided to give up the estate. A number of Cammack family members joined the FOPM board, mill volunteers and others for the tour. The Cammacks—who have contributed generously to FOPM—were happy to see that the Peoples Republic has maintained the beauty of the home while making a number of improvements and enhancing the grounds.

ROCK CREEK PARK DAY

at Peirce Mill

Saturday, September 27

10am – 4pm

Mill Grinding
Music

Dry Stone Wall Demo

a look back

CATALOGUE

**FRUIT AND FOREST TREES,
FLOWERING SHRUBS, &c.,**

FOR SALE BY JOSHUA PEIRCE,

At his Nurseries on Barb Creek near Washington, D. C., and on
11th Street, in the City.

APPLES, at 25 cents. *Pyrus malus.*

When a few only are wanted, (select fruit and choice trees,) 25 cents will be charged, unless the order be extended to other articles of considerable amount, then 20 cents per tree.

Ripe in June and July.

White June eating.....No. 2	Summer Rose.....No. 5
Peirce's Harvest, or Early Golden.....3	Red June eating.....6
Water Melon, or Early Rough.....4	Early Clearstrinking.....7
	Snake Apple.....8

Ripe in August.

Summer Pearmain.....No. 9	Large English Codling.....12
Summer Queen.....10	Nale Apple.....14
Celtus, or Swain's Apple.....11	Maiden's Blush.....16
American Codling.....12	

Ripe in September.

Winchester Apple.....No. 15	Fall Pippin.....No. 21
Wine, or Hayes Apple.....20	

Ripe in October and November.

Rambou.....No. 22	French Pippin.....25
Monstrous Bellflower.....23	Barn's Fancy.....26
Monstrous Pippin.....24	Fall Catalin.....27

* Not ready until the fall of 1857.

EARLY WINTER AND KEEPING APPLES.

Newton Schuteburg.....No. 28	Baldwin Pippin.....No. 41
Yellow Bellflower.....29	Swankhouse Apple.....42
Peacock.....31	Northern Spy.....50
Flushing Spitzenberg.....32	White Bellflower.....60
Rhode Island, or Jersey Greening.....33	Wine Apple.....61
Green Newtown Pippin.....34	Swart Apple.....63
Yellow Newtown Pippin.....35	Campfield.....64
Pommes d'Api, or Lady Apple.....36	Forster Apple.....65
Winter Cadis.....37	Hubbardson's Nonsuch.....66
Carthage.....39	Red and Green Sweeting.....67
Ballou's Jeneing, or Back of Back.....49	

CORNER APPLES.

I. denotes those highly esteemed for table use.

Bull's Cider Apple, L.....No. 55	Harrison Apple.....No. 47
Gray House, L.....57	Whisper, L.....46
Black, or Virginia Red Struck, L.....58	Hugh's Virginia Crab.....48
Gray, or Maryland Red Struck.....41	Wang's Crab of Virginia.....43

Ornamental—Price 25¢ each.

Large Wild Crab, for Preserve.....No. 59
Small Wild Crab.....61
Cherry Crab.....52
Esoteric.....53
Double Flowering.....54
Dwarf of Paradise.....55

PEACHES, 15 to 25 cents; \$10 per 100.

Persons taking 100, or more, will be supplied at \$10 per hundred. When a few only are wanted, select fruit and choice trees, 25 cents will be charged, unless the order will be extended to other articles of considerable amount—\$30 per 1,000.

Early Renette.....No. 3	Red Renette, freestone.....No. 5
Yellow Renette, freestone.....4	Large Early York.....6



Friends of
PEIRCE MILL
2036 Pierce Mill Road, NW
Washington, DC 20010

