



TrueGrist

News from the Friends of Peirce Mill

Coming Up at Peirce Mill

July:
Square Dance

August:
Ice Cream Social

October:
Heritage Day

November:
Cider Tasting



Saturday Family Activities at Peirce Barn

After seeing the mill in action, join our children's workshops, designed for ages 3 and up (all are welcome). Enjoy traditional toys and games, and make crafts such as cornhusk dolls, baskets, and candles. No reservations necessary. 11 am – 2pm.

May 13, 27;
June 10, 24;
July 8, 22;
Aug. 12, 26;
Sept. 9, 23;
Oct. 14, 28

Our Orchard has a Master

Brightwood DC resident Tim Makepeace stopped by the mill one day last summer and told miller Jeanne Minor that he had some thoughts about improving the historic demonstration orchard. Little did we know that Tim had more than ideas. He's a man with a plan.

Tim drew up a proposal to amend the soil, sow cover crops to improve fertility, space the existing trees to allow more room for growth, and graft stock of classic American cider apples. To help underwrite this activity, Tim set up an appeal on the Razoo online fundraising site.

Volunteers recruited by Tim got to work in March, and by mid-April had made a really good start on the project. The National Park Service pitched in with several dump truck loads of mulch ground from downed Rock Creek trees. In addition to the Razoo page, FOPM business manager David Lyman helped secure a \$2,000 IBM grant available for the orchard if needed.

Tim is a self-taught orchardist with many skills:



Tim Makepeace supervising delivery of mulch to the orchard (photo by Steve Dryden).

he paints, sculpts, built an addition to his house -- and makes his own cider. His mother Lindsay Makepeace was an accomplished artist who sketched the mill and other park landmarks.

Tim recommended that we put up a deer fence around the entire orchard (replacing the existing wire cages) to give the trees more room for branching and to prevent the deer from nibbling the tops of the trees. In June, volunteers from the Deloitte LLP company's Washington offices will devote a day of

service to raising the fence and other tasks. This service project was organized by a new FOPM member Julia Bernier, who also convinced the company to make a \$2,500 donation for the fence and other supplies.

Many thanks Tim, Julia, and all others for their contributions, which bring us closer to the goal of having a functioning orchard to educate visitors about the Peirce's horticultural legacy – and perhaps, supply the filling for our own apple pies!

The Friends of Peirce Mill work in partnership with the National Park Service to preserve this historically significant example of early American industry. Located in Rock Creek Park, the water-powered flour mill offers educational experiences to all generations.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President:

Adam Sieminski

Vice President:

Nate Marzoli

Treasurer:

Sharon Hart

Secretary:

Bill McLeod

Tom Blackburn

John DeFerrari

David Lyman

ADVISORS

Program Manager/

Newsletter Editor:

Steve Dryden

Newsletter Design:

Karol A. Keane

Keanedesign.com

Grants Update

The Friends of Peirce Mill recently received grants of \$3,000 each from the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and from Eastern National, a non-profit organization associated with the National Park Service. The two grants will support Heritage Day, the summer square dance, and family programs at the mill — as well as a study on how the Friends can expand year-round activities and improve school education programming. The goals include increasing overall visitation to the mill within two years from 13,000 to 15,000 annually, and engaging five new schools east of the park in formal visits to the mill.

Sieminski Returns to Lead FOPM



He's back. **Adam Sieminski**, (above) who succeeded Richard Abbott as FOPM president, served for a short time during the mill's restoration and re-opening in 2011-12, but had to take a leave of absence while leading the U.S. Energy Information Administration. Adam remained an active volunteer, and in February, after leaving government service amidst the

change in administrations, he was free to resume his FOPM role.

We'd like to thank **Quentin Looney**, who has served as president for the past three years, and gave invaluable help to miller Jeanne as well as spearheading the barrel hoist restoration project. Quentin, who has a strong interest in food science and

preparation, was also the force behind our popular cider tasting event last year.

Meanwhile, **Nate Marzoli** has joined the board as FOPM vice president. Nate is a historian at the U.S. Army Center of Military History in Washington. His primary area of expertise is the Civil War, and he has written extensively on his home state of New Hampshire's involvement. Nate served in the Air Force from 2007 to 2011, then decided to pursue a career in history, earning a bachelor's and master's degrees in history with a concentration in museum studies at the University of New Hampshire. In 2015, while working as a crew member in the park for the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club, Nate visited Peirce Mill and later signed on as a volunteer.



The first square dance at the mill in the 21st century attracted several hundred participants last summer. This year's dance will be July 29. (photo by Bill McLeod)



Celebrating the spring herring/shad migration season, FOPM educator Angela Kramer created an obstacle course that mimicked the fishes' journey from the ocean up into streams such as Rock Creek, where they pass by the dam in a covered stone channel. Above, children try out the "fish ladder" at the April 30 event. (photo by Steve Dryden)



From the Peirce Mill Kitchen

Here's a great recipe for cornmeal muffins from Laurie Sieminski, baker extraordinaire and wife of FOPM president Adam.

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Ingredients: $\frac{3}{4}$ cup yellow cornmeal; 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups sifted white unbleached flour; 4 teaspoons baking powder; $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt; 2 tablespoons granulated



Ward Three DC Councilmember Mary Cheh (second from left), helps with the first grinding of corn this spring on April 7. Also in photo, left to right, are ranger Dana Dierkes, ranger Tony Linforth, miller Jeanne Minor, and former FOPM president Quentin Looney. (photo by Bill McLeod)

sugar; 1 egg, beaten; 1 cup milk; 4 tablespoons melted shortening **or** $\frac{1}{4}$ cup vegetable oil.

Sift together flour, baking powder, salt and sugar; mix well with the cornmeal. Combine egg, milk, and vegetable oil. Turn liquid mixture into the dry ingredients all at once, and

stir quickly and vigorously until the dry and liquid ingredients are just mixed. Fill greased muffin pans about $\frac{2}{3}$ full of batter, and bake for 20 minutes, or until an inserted toothpick comes out clean.

New Rock Creek Superintendent



Julia Washburn, who was the ranger in charge of interpretation and education when FOPM was created in 1997, became the new Rock Creek Park superintendent in March. She replaced Tara Morrison, who transferred to National Capital Parks East. Julia most recently served as Park Service's deputy for education – and says she is "thrilled to be 'coming home' to serve as superintendent.

"As a native Washingtonian, I have loved Rock Creek all my life."

Dana Dierkes became the new ranger in charge of interpretation last fall. Dana, most recently in California with the Park Service, has also worked at the Clara Barton Historic Site in Glen Echo and at the George Washington National Parkway.

History

Peirce Mill is the last remaining of the many water-powered gristmills that once flourished along the banks of Rock Creek in the District of Columbia. Built in the 1820s by millwright Isaac Peirce, it operated commercially until 1897. Now owned by the National Park Service and incorporated into Rock Creek Park in the early 1900s, the mill is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Friends of Peirce Mill led a capital campaign that restored the mill to operating condition in 2011. In partnership with the National Park Service, the Friends are now working to complete the rehabilitation of the water-powered grain and flour-handling system designed by the noted American inventor Oliver Evans. The restored system will allow the full interpretation of the mill for visiting school groups and the general public.



Morris Dancing, a tradition from the Cotswold region of England, was originally intended to celebrate the passing of winter and stimulate the growth of crops and all living creatures. The local Rock Creek Morris Dancers group performed their version of the rites in March at the mill to welcome spring. (photo by Bill Mills)



Your annual membership can make a difference! Let's keep Peirce Mill running for another 200 years!

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------|---|--------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual | \$25 | <input type="checkbox"/> Millwright | \$250 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family | \$50 | <input type="checkbox"/> Master Millwright | \$500 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Miller | \$100 | <input type="checkbox"/> Isaac Peirce Society | \$1000 |

Other donation: \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____ Please print clearly

*Make checks payable to Friends of Peirce Mill and send to
2930 Brandywine St NW, Washington, DC 20008-2138*

For more information, email us at: info@peircemillfriends.org or call: 202-248-1505
Or join and pay by credit card at www.friendsofpeircemill.org

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