



TrueGrist

News from the Friends of Peirce Mill

Coming Up at Peirce Mill

The mill is open Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, 10am – 4pm. The water-powered millstones grind corn on the second and fourth Saturdays from April until October, starting at 11am.

Please check our website to confirm dates and times for the events below.

July 28:
Square Dance

August 4:
Ice Cream Social

September 8:
Children's Day

October 13:
Heritage Day

December:
Solstice Celebration and Wassailing

Family Saturdays at Peirce Barn

The mill offers free family activities on the second and fourth Saturdays, from 11am – 2pm, designed for ages three and up. Children can play games with traditional toys, and make cornhusk dolls, baskets and candles.

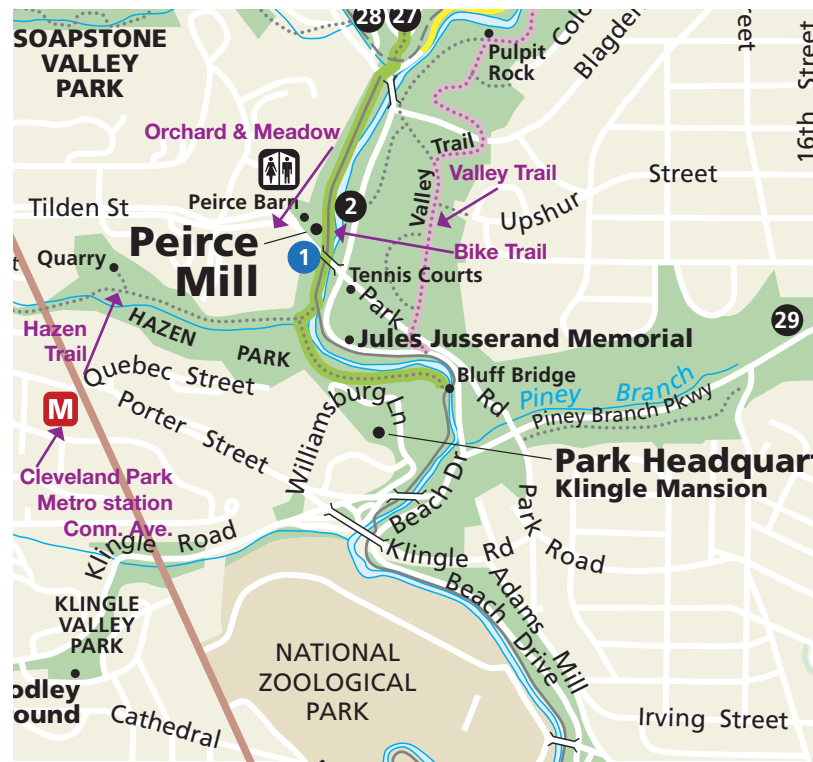
Take A Walk!

Peirce Mill is ideally centered in Rock Creek National Park to walk, bike, and jog. Whatever your skill level, or interest, it can be accommodated on the various paved trails and unpaved paths that pass by or begin at the mill. Pick up an official map of the park - available at the mill and barn - or refer to the excerpt below. Volunteer **Reggie Kelly**, who is on site many weekends, is an experienced trails man and can give you special tips. Need water? There's an old fashioned pump (it's DC tap water) outside the mill facing Tilden Street. Bathrooms are across Tilden at the other end of the parking lot.

Here are some of the opportunities:

Bike Trail: This paved path, also used by walkers and joggers, runs north/south throughout the entire park and is directly in back of the mill.

Melvin Hazen Trail: An adventurous unpaved uphill path along the pleasant contours of the Hazen Creek valley, which will take you



to Connecticut Avenue and Cleveland Park. Pick it up at the southwestern edge of the large field across the street from the mill.

Valley Trail: In fact, it's more of a hill trail. A trailhead is at the intersection of Beach Drive and Broad Branch Road., a quarter mile north of the mill. The trail stretches all the way to the Maryland state line, about five miles.

Orchard and Meadow:

Though not an official trail, there is a winding, mowed access path through a reclaimed woodland area, which begins just west and uphill from the mill and orchard. You'll see a meadow of native wild grasses and newly planted trees, and on the other side of the meadow is a shaded stream trickling over exposed rock.

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 National Park, the water-powered flour mill offers educational experiences to all generations.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Bill McLeod

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New Board Members



We've welcomed two new board members in recent months.

Greg Nau is a systems engineer who has worked for government, industry and private clients. For almost a decade, Greg has been designing and managing the construction of small scale hydropower plants in the United Kingdom. These systems use environmentally-friendly Archimedes screw turbine technology to generate electricity. Among the projects he's worked on is a twin screw 270 kilowatt system on the River Thames providing power to Windsor Castle, the home of Queen Elizabeth. Greg's work

on hydropower projects includes developing passages for fish, eels and lampreys, and mammal ramps.

Tim Makepeace, whom we profiled in the last issue, also has joined the board. Tim is the man behind the improvements and expansion of our historic orchard.

Change at the Top



FOPM President **Adam Sieminski**, one year into his second term in this position, has been named president of the King Abdullah Petroleum Studies and Research Center, in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Adam and his wife Laurie moved to Riyadh at the end of March. The FOPM board has named **Bill McLeod**, the board secretary and volunteer coordinator, to be the new president.

Adam's appointment follows his work on the White House National Security Council, and heading the U.S. Energy Information Administration under President Obama. We wish Adam the best of luck in his exciting new position, and thank him for his leadership and substantial contributions to the Friends of Peirce Mill.

In Memoriam



Sheila Wagner Ploger

Former FOPM board member **Sheila Wagner Ploger**, 77, passed away unexpectedly in Oberlin, Ohio on October 30, 2017. Sheila played an integral part in the restoration of Peirce Mill from the very first meeting held by the Friends of Peirce Mill in the fall of 1996, serving as the membership chair and secretary-treasurer from 1997 to 2014. Richard Abbott, the founder and first president of FOPM, remembers the early days when Sheila helped with member communications, wrote fund raising letters, and set up the extensive computer files needed to track so many projects, people, and organizations. "Sheila was very generous with her time, always available when needed, and kept things on track when I got too caught up in the details," said Abbott. "Her warm smile was a welcoming sight to all the visitors at the mill" recalled former board member Philip Gaudette.

Born in Oberlin, Sheila received bachelors and master's degrees in geology, worked in Colorado for the U.S. Geological Survey, then moved to California, where she raised two children, and worked for a start-up computer hardware company. Relocating to Washington DC in 1985,

Sheila worked for 20 years with children in the media center of a Montgomery County elementary school. After retiring, she was motivated to join FOPM by her love of history and desire to ensure Peirce Mill would be preserved as an outstanding learning opportunity for area schoolchildren and other visitors.

Bob Day, another early member of the FOPM board, died June 24, 2017 at age 83. Bob served as secretary/treasurer on the first board, and started the process of incorporation as a tax-exempt organization, including working with an attorney to prepare the application to the IRS. Bob was a cheerful presence, and pitched in frequently as the "canopy man" who set up the tents when we held an open house or other public event. A career State Department diplomat, Bob served in East Germany, Poland, Yugoslavia and Iran. Crew, however, was his lifelong passion. After his retirement from the government, Bob spearheaded a youth rowing program on the Anacostia River, helping to build what is today the Anacostia Community Boathouse, with special programs for youth, seniors, the handicapped, and survivors of breast cancer.



Mill Haiku

By Jeff Reardon

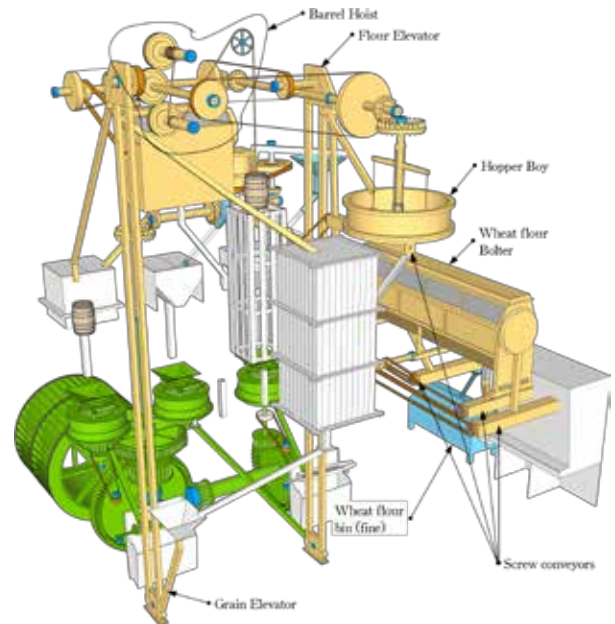
The grinding begins,
Old times are
resurrected,
Smells, sounds come
alive!

Ranger Jeff Reardon has been at Rock Creek Park for seven years. He recently completed a master's degree at Georgetown University, where his thesis was on the Park Service's Old Stone House on M Street. His hobbies include acting and collecting old bottles. He does periodic interpretation at Peirce Mill.

Portal to the past,
A door opens to
welcome,
Cats went up one time!
Beams at attention!
Chipped with smooth,
old with new...rise!
In synchrony all.

Grants and Restoration Update

The Friends of Peirce Mill are deeply appreciative to its longtime funder, the Marpat Foundation, which extended a \$40,000 grant in 2017 as a final gift before shutting down. This grant gives us a good start in assembling the funding necessary for completing rehabilitation of the Oliver Evans automated system that moves grain and flour through the mill. The 2011 restoration put the waterwheel, gears and millstones back in working condition; the final steps will enable demonstration of the grain and flour elevators, as well as the other cleaning, cooling, and sifting mechanisms that make up the Evans system.



3-D schematic view by Greg Nau showing four floors of "Evans system" equipment at Peirce Mill. Objects shaded yellow will be restored in the next phase of work; green objects are components already in working condition.



A cider tasting attracted about 100 FOPM members and friends to the mill in January. Local author Garrett Peck spoke about the history of alcohol in Washington DC before the bottles were opened. In this photo, Wesley Cornell (center), a Mt. Pleasant resident and orchard manager for Willow Oaks Cider in Middletown, Md., introduces his company's products.

(Photo by William Mills)



Nate Marzoli prepares handmade ice cream at the social FOPM held at the mill last summer. This year, it's scheduled for August 4.

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.



Miller Jeanne Minor (center) with some of our wonderful volunteer guides/helpers. From left: Sharon Hart, Don Titus, Christopher Hackman, and Nate Marzoli. Contact us (volunteer@friendsofpeircemill.org) if you can spare six hours a month for the best mill in the country!



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 _____

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Make checks payable to Friends of Peirce Mill and send to 2039 New Hampshire Ave. NW, Apt. 103, Wash. DC 20009

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.