

Friends of Colvin Run Mill

July-September 2023



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NOTICE

OUR ANNUAL MEETING AND ELECTION OF BOARD MEMBERS IS SCHEDULED FOR OCTOBER 17, 2023, 10:30 AM IN THE EDUCATION CENTER. ALL MEMBERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND!!!!

ON-GOING EVENTS

General Store: Open Thursdays thru Sundays

Miller's House Exhibit and Mill Tours: Saturdays and Sundays. .

Grind Days: Milling continues on Sundays (12 to 3) through October

See column opposite for exciting educational opportunities

Details and information at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/colvin-run-mill

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

New and reoccurring events scheduled for Colvin Run Mill, August 2023 thru September 2023.

Check ParkTakes for time and registration requirements.

August Events:

Sunday, 6th & 20th Grind Days; 12:00 to 3:00 pm. Blacksmith demos. Woodcarver lessons.

September Events:

Saturday, 9th (evening) "Mingle at the Mill". Contact the Celebrate Great Falls Foundation for participation.

Thursday, 14th & 21st two part class: Basic Felting: Making Bears; 7:00-8:30 pm (16 to adults)

Sunday, 17th Grind Day (12 to 3) ; Blacksmith demo (no grind day on September 3rd) Woodcarver lessons.

Saturday, 23rd; 1:00—2:30 pm; From the Garden: Tinctures, Oils and Vinegars (16 to adults)

Saturday, 30th ; 2:00—3:30; Science Meets History: Bubbles! (see page 2 "Engineering Day" for description) (family event, geared towards children 5—10)

Save a date in October: Cider making; bring your own apples!

Saturday, October 7, 14, 21, and 28; Sunday, October 8, 15, 22, 29. 1 Hour sessions at 9 and 11 AM; 1 and 3 PM. Reservations required. Maximum of ten people per session.

LANDSCAPING SUCCESSES

With the assistance of OakTree LLC, the landscaping around the Miller's house is evolving. At former FOCRMB Board Member Larry Herman's suggestion, a medicinal garden has been installed and will serve as the basis for a new educational opportunity (see September 23rd). In July, OakTree installed FOCRMB funded plant markers (including plant specific QR codes) in the newly planted formal garden (see below). These will help the attractiveness and educational value of these improvements.



SUCCESS OF “ENGINEERING THEN AND NOW” ON MAY 20

On Saturday May 20 from 12-3 pm “Oliver Evans” (aka Mike Henry, the former site manager, and FoCRM Board Member) and his assistant (Robert Colblenz, a real engineer and another FoCRM Board Member) explained Evans’ innovations as the 75 participants watched the mill operate. Participants watched a Smithsonian Air and Space Museum film explaining how they employ technology used at the mill in their operations today.

More importantly, participants engaged in a variety of engineer experiments to test their knowledge and appreciation for engineering principles. We hope to replicate this program next year and are looking for ideas and suggestions (email: dawn.bova@fairfaxcounty.gov).



This day was the start of a series of events that will link Science and History. “Bubbles” is the next (Saturday, September 30) when we will:

- Learn about surface tension and bubbles
- Make giant bubbles
- Make a station where you can stand inside a forming bubble (we hope)
- Explore how the miller’s families used soapy bubbles in their lives (wash clothes)

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

Camps at Colvin Run are full up with young ones cranking ice cream, churning butter, baking biscuits, and learning about milling flour and cornmeal. It is a joy to see kids engaged using their heads and hands and producing a tangible product – that is eatable to boot!

Good news on the FCPA budget. The Board of Supervisors authorized budgeting three full time tree experts and one expert to help eradicate wildly spreading bamboo. The BOS’s action acknowledges that the FCPA, the largest landowner in the county, has a special responsibility for the stewardship of these wonderful trees that provide air and water purification services 24/7.

We continue to be optimistic that the trail to link the north side to the south side of the park via the new pedestrian underpass under Route 7 will be completed when the road construction is finished next year. Work is underway to map the wetlands, to establish the alignment of a trail, and to perform a hydrological study to determine the most suitable point to cross Colvin Run. After this work is concluded in August (we hope) a new task order will be issued in the fall (we hope) to design the trail and secure the necessary permits. Construction will follow.

Election of the board of directors is coming up at the General Meeting on October 17. Only paid in members can vote. If you were ever thinking about becoming a Friend, now is a good time to do so to make your voice heard and money count to supporting Colvin Run Mill Park where memories are made.

Jim Wallar

President, Friends of Colvin Run Mill

Become an Official “Friend of Colvin Run Mill”

Membership dues are as follows: Individual - \$35 a year, Family - \$55, Business - \$100.

Membership supports this historic treasure that continues to educate and inform while grinding out fine whole wheat flour, not to mention cornmeal, grits, and buckwheat flour.

Join now by completing the membership form on the Friends of Colvin Run Mill site (focrm.org/be-a-friend).

COLVIN RUN MILL PLAYED HOST TO A MEETING OF THE “SOCIETY FOR THE PRESERVATION OF OLD MILLS” (SPOOM)

On Friday, April 21, the Mill hosted a meeting of the Mid-Atlantic Chapter of SPOOM, a nationwide organization dedicated, as the name says, to the preservation of old mills, grist and otherwise. We have a long standing relationship with SPOOM and have provided training for SPOOM members in years past.

Visitors toured the mill, were provided outlines of projects (like our simple machine program) which use the mill and its technology as a learning tool for visitors of all ages, and stayed for a lunch catered by Mookie’s BBQ in the Education Center. From here they toured the Aldie Mill later in the day and on Saturday toured Peirce Mill in the District and held a business meeting.

Go to “[Home - Society for the Preservation of Old Mills \(spoom.org\)](http://Home - Society for the Preservation of Old Mills (spoom.org))” for more information.



The SPOOM Visitors



Mike Henry explains the 4th floor

NEED A PLACE TO SIT?

The Friends are helping out. We have ordered several outdoor benches to add to the utility of the new garden plantings and have purchased 52 new padded folding chairs to replace the old and sometimes unstable chairs for the education center.

EDUCATION CENTER PLAQUE

The Friends have designed and had created a plaque which will shortly be installed in the Marjorie and Robert Lundegard Education Center explaining the genesis of its designation in their honor.

FRIENDS FINANCIAL STATUS

We have gotten word from the Fairfax County Park Foundation that our application for a “Mastenbrook Grant” intended to help pay for the restoration of the Family Garden has been approved. This grant will pay about half of the total cost of the project.

The initiative for the restoration and maintenance of the Family Garden has attracted other resources (including the donation made by the Celebrate Great Falls Foundation). This will cover nearly 3/4 of the cost and permit the Friends to better respond to other priority projects during the year.

THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!

SIMPLE MACHINES PROGRAM REBOUNDS FROM COVID-19 RECESS

This spring saw the return of the use of the mill’s



“simple machines” program for area elementary schools. As the staff realized many years ago, the mill provides a unique opportunity for elementary schools to satisfy a Virginia Standards of Learning

requirement for third graders for understanding simple machines (can you name the six simple machines?). So this year, with the site again open to school groups, 25 elementary schools with 2,455 students took part in this remarkable field trip. The photo is of a group here on April 11, 2023.