

Friends of Colvin Run Mill

10017 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls, VA

703-759- 2771



April—June 2025

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RECIPE OF THE MONTH: JENNY OWEN'S CORN BREAD

By Jim Wallar

When I was growing up (in the north, I will admit) cornbread meant nearly tasteless yellow crumbs made tolerable by a heavy heap of butter and a generous pour of honey. Not so with Jenny Owen's corn bread that the famous chef James Beard exclaims is "the finest corn bread I have ever eaten." And he appears to have eaten quite a few.

The key is eggs, milk, cream, and butter. Ok, not for an everyday meal. But as a sumptuous splurge and to share with friends, it is dreamy.

Blend ½ cup of sifted flour with 1 ½ cups of Colvin Run stone ground corn meal, 1 teaspoon salt, 1 teaspoon sugar and 3 teaspoons baking powder. Beat in three eggs and 1 cup milk; then beat in ¼ cup cream; then beat in 1/3 cup melted butter.



THE CORN BREAD

Pour into an 8 ½ x 11-inch buttered pan and bake at 400 degrees for around 15 to 18 minutes (I went to 20). Let cool. Cut into squares and eat as is or with a bit of ham or your favorite topping. No extra butter or honey necessary! It will absolutely melt in your mouth!

Recipe from James Beard's *American Cookery*

MAJOR EVENTS

April thru June

Spring has sprung with many new and refreshed programs for all ages. "In the Garden" kids will search for worms, pollinators, and care for plants that give us tasty foods. Spirited Grains Whiskey Tasting follows grains to the glass. Colvin Run Mill staff will be grinding and demonstrating our historic still. Mt Defiance Distillery and Cidery will be leading whiskey tastings! Attention all movie buffs, Movie at the Mill come and enjoy *Pride and Prejudice*. Test your dancing skills with 19th-century dancing. Finally, are you ready for summer? Enjoy Ice Cream and Games at the Mill; churn ice cream and play historic games in a beautiful park. Finally, for the young ones, Toddler Take Over - this summer-time program will have your little ones exploring the park with all their senses.

See page 3 for specific dates

COME JOIN THE TEAM

We are always looking for additional county volunteers to help with our school programs (simple machines) and any of our other offerings. Just a few hours a month will help us and provide you with a great sense of accomplishment.

Contact Kiersten Fiore at 703-759-2771

BECOME AN OFFICIAL "FRIENDS OF COLVIN RUN MILL" MEMBER

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

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

MAPLE SYRUP BOIL DOWN

What a great Maple Syrup Boil Down this year! 716 park visitors explored how sap becomes syrup. In mid-January, Steve, our Lead Miller, tapped four trees, Norway and Red Maples. Park trees produced 40 gallons of sap. Tapping trees is a skill, but staff demonstrated the process so visitors could try it in their backyards. Visitors learned about the history, tools, and work it takes to tap trees and turn that raw material into a tasty syrup.



TOOLS OF THE TRADE



TAPPING A TREE



BOILING THE SAP

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Ah, spring. The “crack of the bat.” And the mucking of the head race. Instead of a Louisville slugger, the miller uses a pitchfork to clean out sticks, leaves, and the occasional snail from the head race, so water can flow freely into the flume and onto the waterwheel to put the mill in motion. A new season is about to begin.

Spring is the time to tend to the several gardens around the miller's house, mill, and general store. We are always looking for willing hands to weed and mulch. No greater feeling that to stand back and regard a good morning's labor in the dirt.

Spring is also the time for the Fairfax County budget. Times are tougher than usual. The advertised General Fund budget proposes \$60 million in cuts, about one percent. But hold on: the Park Authority would suffer about a four percent cut from its General Fund budget. That hardly seems fair. I will be testifying at the Board of Supervisors to roll back some of the proposed cuts, such as to trail and athletic court maintenance and forestry contracting, so the Park Authority's reductions are more in line with those of other departments. If you are of a mind to, you can write your district supervisor, advocating no disproportionate cuts to the Park Authority's General Fund budget.

And spring marks the passing of another season in which the magnificent tunnel under Route 7 joining the two halves of the park still does not have the 800-foot trail so visitors can explore the south side's mill dam and pond and wetlands and connect to county trails. Hope does spring eternal that the work will be completed this year.

Jim Wallar

President, Friends of Colvin Run Mill

For more from the President, see [President's Grindstone blog](#) on our web site

Great articles on water wheels, the grits contest, the Archimedes screw, mill stones, and much, much more

“GET INVOLVED GREAT FALLS”

On February 8th FoCRM participated in “Get Involved Great Falls” at the Great Falls Grange with eleven other non-profit organizations, including the Rotary Club, Celebrate Great Falls, the Optimist Club, the Arts of Great Falls, Amadeus, Lift Me Up, the Grange Foundation, and the Great Falls Philharmonic.

Despite the threat of snow, the event was a great opportunity to network with the local community and answer questions about Colvin Run’s history, grain products, and upcoming events.



COLVIN RUN DISPLAY

Colvin Run Mill joined the Good Times in Great Falls group that meets regularly to discuss upcoming activities, increasing public awareness of programs and avoiding event conflicts, where possible.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS APRIL THRU JUNE 2025

April

5 Remembering Metilda: Growing Up Enslaved
5 Science Meets History: Flying
6 Mill in Motion
12 In the Garden: Pollinators
19 Egg Hunts

May

4 Mill in Motion
10 Spring Family Tea Party
11 In the Garden: Treats
17 Engineering Then & Now
17 Spirited Grains Whiskey Tasting
18 Mill in Motion
18 Beginning Wool Work
31 Science Meets History: Bubbles
31 Movie at the Mill: Pride and Prejudice

June

1 Mill in Motion-New Hands-on Activities
5 Needle Felting Posable Mouse (2 classes)
15 Father’s Day Mill in Motion
21 Remembering Metilda - Growing Up Enslaved
21 Simple Machines-Work and Play
22 Ice Cream and Games at the Mill
30 Toddler Take Over

Check ParkTakes for specific time and registration requirements.

NEW BOOK BY LOCAL HISTORIAN

Great Falls resident historian Karen Washburn’s just released book, *Supply and Demand: The Development of Arlington and Fairfax Counties, 1649-1960*, is filled with local history fun facts.

Alexandria flour merchants would roam as far as Winchester to purchase wheat to keep ahead of rivals in Baltimore and Philadelphia.

George Washington frequently visited the canal being built around Great Falls, braving rain, sleet, and a foot of snow. He would spend the night at Towlston Grange, home of his friend Bryan Fairfax. That Grange was being used as a hay barn in 1937 when a couple purchased it as a fix-it-up special, not knowing it was built in 1746 and that Washington had slept there.

Hachaliah Bailey was in the vanguard of the “Yankee invasion” of Northern Virginia in 1837 when he bought several hundred acres to winter his circus animals, the place now known as Bailey’s Crossroads.

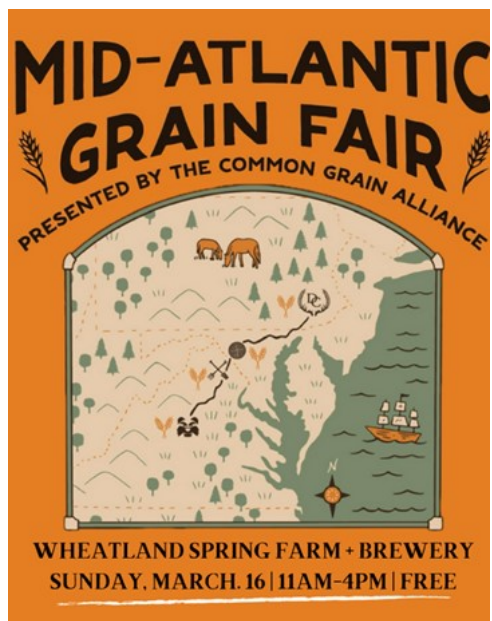
The Fairfax Fox Hunt, established in 1927 at Sunset Farms (now Reston), had hounds running from Tyson’s Corners to Great Falls chasing foxes who, if not caught, feasted on farmer’s flocks and were protected from being shot by law.

Moonshiners preferred hideouts along the Potomac to give the revenuers the slip, floating away down the river.

Property development from Robert “King” Carter to William Dunn and George Loring is described in detail, as roads, bridges, rails, and trolleys opened Northern Virginia to workers in the nation’s capital.

The book is available from Mascot Books of Herndon (www.mascotbooks.com)

COLVIN RUN AT MID-ATLANTIC COMMON GRAIN ALLIANCE FAIR



What an exhilarating and windy afternoon at the Common Grain Alliance Fair. Colvin Run was present amongst the grain farmers, other millers, bakers, distillers, and a brewer. The latter hosted the event: Wheatland Spring Farm and Brewery (38506 John Wolford Rd, Waterford, VA 20197) which offered a tour and the full range of its fresh liquid bread.

Tara Jensen, renowned author of *Flour Power*, gave detailed tips on making sourdough starter – and keeping it fresh – without stress. She fielded many questions, one of which was, “Why do bread bakers talk so much about pizza?” Her answer: pizza is more fun. Her own pizza book will be out next year.

The event was capped off with a tour of an organic farm, a look at Meadow Bakery’s woodfired oven, and a talk on making pasta from whole wheat and other grains. Something for everyone!



GRAIN PRODUCTS AT THE FAIR



THE COLVIN RUN BOOTH

Visit the Common Grain Alliance stand at Mosaic’s Sunday Farmer’s Market that stock member’s grain products!

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