

Friends of Colvin Run Mill

10017 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls, VA

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July—September 2025

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UPCOMING EVENTS

July thru September

July

6 Mill in Motion
11 Remembering Metilda - Growing Up Enslaved
13 Science Meets History - Flight
20 Mill in Motion
20 Picnic in the Park
26 Science Meets History - Bubbles
28 Toddler Take Over

August

3 Mill in Motion
9 Ice Cream and Games at the Mill
10 Science Meets History - Spies
16 Movie at the Mill: White Rabbit Tea Party
17 Mill in Motion
25 Toddler Take Over

September

7 Mill in Motion
13 Science Meets History - Bubbles
20 Creating Oils, Tinctures and Vinegars
21 Mill in Motion
24 Felting Basics - Make a Bear
27 Grit and Grain - African American Millers
29 Mini Millers

Specific times and registration requirements are available in Parktakes

SITE CHANGES

Colvin Run Mill has a new accessible entrance to the Majorie and Robert Lundegard Education Center. The new path is accessible for all and includes the space around the water fountain.



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).

NEW OFFERINGS

Several new activities were successfully offered in the in the past three months. The new Spirited Grains Whiskey Tasting evening was very exciting and brought a lot of brand-new visitors to the site.

The Movie at the Mill (*Pride & Prejudice* (2005)) program went beautifully. Though inclement weather prevented an outdoor movie screening, program attendees got a special treat because it was moved into the first floor of the mill. The movie was followed by The Folklore Society of Greater Washington's English Country Dancers who were wonderful and we were lucky enough that some of their members dressed in Regency era clothing. They also brought a fiddler and a keyboard player. Having live music on the site added to the experience.

Stay tuned for more new offerings!

CONGRATULATIONS ARE IN ORDER!!

The site manager, Kiersten Fiore, has announced that Kristen Cockerill has been promoted to a full time position as Assistant Miller. Kristen knows Colvin Run Mill history from her years supporting the growing range of public programs, assisting in site and mill operations, and working with historic collections.

Kristen has worked in the field for a number of years in history education/interpretation, museum collections, and mill operations. She earned a bachelor's degree in history from George Mason University and has worked as a Museum Education and Collections Management intern at the Alexandria Archaeology Museum. Her knowledge and adaptability interpreting engineering and technical history to the public makes her a stellar steward and Assistant Miller at Colvin Run Mill.

Please join us in welcoming Kristen to the staff and who will greatly help the expansion of offerings available to our visitors (see article above) and enrich the history of the Mill and the Great Falls community.

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

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Who says you can't teach an old mill new tricks? Whiskey tasting and movies at the mill are programs that broke new ground and drew a solid response (see article in adjacent column). Hats off to the site staff for innovative thinking. With summer programs in full swing the staff is teaching many new young summer campers old tricks, like making butter and ice cream, pickling cucumbers, and, of course, grinding grain.

In response to advocacy by many groups, including FoCRM, the County Board of Supervisors (BOS) added back to the proposed Park Authority's budget funds for trail maintenance (\$250K) and open field mowing (\$129,258). A reduction to the Park Foundation's budget is being phased in with half (\$150K) taken in FY 2026 to give the Foundation time "to explore options for further reducing reliance upon County funding in FY 2027 and beyond." The BOS intends to prioritize funding — through the FY 2025 Carryover Review — for enhanced trash and recycling services in the four park maintenance areas not covered in last year's trash and recycling pilot program.

Finally, we will be holding our biannual voting for members of the board at our October meeting. All those interested are invited to drop me a line and/or attend our July 8th meeting at 10:30 at the mill where we will begin the process of organizing a slate of candidates. Executives — president, vice president, treasurer, and secretary — are elected by the new members of the board. Since by the end of the year I will have served two consecutive two-year terms, in keeping with our constitution, the Friends will be looking for new leadership. It is a wonderful opportunity to learn about and interpret to visitors the history, technology, nature, and food associated with the mill and work with talented colleagues on the board and the site staff.

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

THE ANNUAL EGG HUNT, APRIL 2025



Getting ready to Go

The 2025 annual egg hunt was held on Saturday, April 19. Several hunts were held, permitting visitors of different ages and capabilities to fully enjoy the experience.



On the Hunt

ALDRIN ELEMENTARY THIRD GRADERS DISCOVER SIMPLE MACHINES AT HISTORIC COLVIN RUN MILL

By Dan Dyke

GREAT FALLS, VA – Third-grade students from Aldrin Elementary School embarked on an engaging journey back in time on Thursday, May 1st, with a field trip to the historic Colvin Run Mill in nearby Great Falls. The educational outing provided a hands-on learning experience focused on simple machines, perfectly aligning with the Virginia Standards of Learning for Force, Motion and Energy.

Operated by the Fairfax County Park Authority, Colvin Run Mill offers a unique program that draws hundreds of students each year. The mill, built around 1810, was once the heart of a thriving 19th-century community of farmers, craftspeople, and merchants. For over 120 years, it operated as a merchant mill, where millers bought and sold grain and flour, even exporting products through the port of Alexandria. Today, visitors can witness the impressive water-powered system in action as it grinds wheat and corn between massive two-ton grindstones.

Teachers Jennifer Turner, Jennifer Bullen, Raju Tiwana, and Ivette Retrey accompanied their enthusiastic students to explore the mill's rich engineering, commercial, and social history. The program provided a valuable opportunity for the young learners to see and even interact with examples of the six simple machines: the wheel and axle, pulley, inclined plane, lever, screw, and wedge.

Throughout their visit, the students discovered how these fundamental machines made the miller's work significantly easier during the mill's operational years. Inside the historic structure, they witnessed firsthand how grain was transformed into flour and cornmeal by the powerful water-driven grinding stones, and how simple machines played a crucial role in automating the process.

The experience left a lasting impression on the young minds. Third-grader Ethan was particularly captivated by the gears and water wheel, declaring the entire field trip "cool." Parisha, another Aldrin student, eagerly anticipated sharing her newfound knowledge with her parents, stating she "learned about simple machines and things like friction" and, of course, she would talk about the fascinating water wheel.

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RECIPE OF THE MONTH

ICELANDIC RYEBREAD

By Jim Wallar

We recently visited Iceland and enjoyed a daily portion of their traditional ryebread, Rúgbrauð or Lavabread. Delicious with smoked salmon or trout or pickled herring. Fussy about fish? Just slather butter on this slightly sweet, rich dark bread and you will be transported, metaphorically speaking, to the time of the Vikings (or Game of Thrones).

Much time is of the essence to properly bake this bread. Sugar and other sweeteners were sparse in these parts. A slow, long bake released the starches in the rye to impart a slightly sweet taste. How slow? How long? In those parts of Iceland peppered with boiling geothermal pools, the dough is buried in pots and bakes for 24 hours. Geothermally challenged areas would resort to placing the dough in a pot over stove embers. Modern bakers have shortened baking time by incorporating a sweetener. Since no yeast is involved, the process is like making cornbread in a slow cooker.

A word of caution: indulging in too many slices may cause a similar response as eating beans, bestowing on this treat yet another name: Thunder bread.

Ingredients:

3 cups of rye flour
1 ½ cups of Colvin Run whole wheat flour
2 ½ tsp of baking soda
1 tsp salt
3 cups kefir or butter milk
1 cup golden syrup or dark corn syrup



Preheat the oven to 400 °.

Combine the dry ingredients (rye flour, whole wheat flour, baking soda, and salt).

Stir the kefir and golden syrup into the dry ingredients until well combined.

Transfer the dough to a greased square baking pan.

Immediately place in pre-heated oven for 30 minutes.

Lower the temperature to 200 ° and continue baking for 7 hours.

Enjoy!



Recipe from <https://icelandicstore.is/blogs/icelanders-perspective/the-epic-journey-of-icelandic-rye-bread-from-geothermal-magic-to-gourmet-delight>

“FIELD TRIP” CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Amelie, a student in Ms. Bullen’s class, was also excited to recount her learning experience. "I learned different types of simple machines, and I learned what a water wheel was," she explained. Amelie even discovered a favorite among the simple machines: "I just think [the pulley] is kind of fun."

This field trip to Colvin Run Mill provided Aldrin Elementary’s third graders with an invaluable opportunity to connect classroom learning with real-world examples, bringing the principles of force, motion, and energy to life in a truly memorable and historic setting.