



# SPOOM

**Mid-Atlantic Chapter**  
The Society for the Preservation of Old Mills

**Combined 2019  
Spring & Fall  
Editions**

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

- May 14-16—Spring Chapter Meeting
- Oct. 1-3—National SPOOM Conference 2020 in Boston MA
- May 31— deadline for Spring 2020 Newsletter Articles

## SPOOM-MA Chapter

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## BOARD MEMBERS:

Dan Campbell, *Vice President*  
Ivan Lufriu, *Vice President*  
Craig Sansonetti, *Secretary*  
Judy Grove, *Treasurer*  
Robert McLaughlin, *President Emeritus*  
Megan Orient  
Charles Yeske  
Stephen Childers

## President' Message

•Greetings and Happy New Year to all Mid-Atlantic SPOOMer sand other interested folks who are visiting the pages of this newsletter. My apologies that the busy lives of the Officers and Board members have prevented us from producing this document semi-annually, as intended. This issue covers the Spring and Fall 2019 meetings and tours for the reminiscence of those members who attended and the enjoyment / education of those who could not, and some other stories of interest. We resolve to improve on the newsletter schedule in 2020.

•Our Fall Chapter 2019 Meeting, in conjunction with the Northeast SPOOM Chapter (covering ME, VT, NH, MA, RI, CT and NJ), was held at the Red Mill Village Museum in Clinton (central) NJ. It was a great success – visiting local, regional and nationally significant sites, and not just the “run-of-the-mill” places. The story of those tours and the semi-annual business meeting minutes are in this issue.

•The meeting included the election of Board Members and Officers, including Ian LuFriu from Union Mills Homestead in MD as Vice President. Since this position was vacant in recent years, we are grateful to Ivan.

•Our Spring 2020 Mid-Atlantic Chapter meeting, in the area of Chester County, PA, includes a working grist mill, several static mills, and textile, iron and steel mills of regional and national import. Save the tentative dates of May 14 to 16 (Thursday to Saturday) 2020.

•Our membership numbers have dropped recently. In daily contacts, help spread the word to your historically interested friends that the world of old mills and milling is a short distance away: on our website, in this newsletter, and the tours in our MA Chapter region. Also be aware that the National SPOOM 2020 Conference will be held close to us, in the Boston area, from October 1 to 3. If you are not a member of SPOOM, now would be an idea time to join, and enjoy meeting those of like minds from across the country, in October.

•[www.spoom.org](http://www.spoom.org)

*Daniel T. Campbell*

## ***Mid-Atlantic Chapter Spring 2019 Meeting***

By Dan Campbell, President

•The Mid-Atlantic Chapter of SPOOM held its Spring 2019 meeting April 11 to 13 in the Lower Susquehanna Valley area of VA.

•Thursday night 20 Mid-Atlantic SPOOMers joined for a Meet & Greet dinner at Mrs. Rowe's Restaurant, adjacent to the Best Western, in Staunton, VA, our host hotel. Our Friday tours began when we traveled south from the hotel to Raphine, in the picturesque Shenandoah Valley, west of the Blue Ridge Mountains.

•Wades Mill, (formerly Kennedy-Wade's), was our first visit, and sits on property which was one patent, among the 92,100 Acre (Benjamin) Borden Land Tract of 1739. A minimum 1000 Ac of land went to each immigrant family to the British Colony of Virginia – 1000 Ac came to Captain Joseph Kennedy from Northern Ireland. The first mill was built by him in 1750 and operated by the family until 1785. The second owner was H.B. Jones, who kept a journal / diary of the economics of the mill, resulting in a book which is available today. A fire in the 1870's destroyed a portion of the mill, but many artifacts and ledgers were salvaged, and are in the Washington & Lee University collection, just south in Lexington, VA.

•The Wade family operated the mill from 1882 to 1990, over 4 generations. It is said to be the oldest, continuously operating commercial grist mill in VA, and is on the National Register of Historic Places and the Virginia Landmarks Registry. Our hosts, Karen & John Siegfried obtained the mill in 2016, as the seventh owners, after each retired from former careers. Despite the hard work of restoring and operating the mill, they said that the attractiveness of the surroundings has made the effort worthwhile.

[www.wadesmill.com](http://www.wadesmill.com)



***Owner John Siegfried describes the operation of Wade's Mill***



***Former stone floor, above the hurst frame, which was replaced by an electrically-driven Meadows Mill.***



***Unusual barrel packer with rotating conical presses at Wade's Mill.***



•The Ott Creek fills the mill pond on a hill behind the mill; the steel waterwheel is operational - fed through an underground pipe, which rises up to the flume box at the top of the wheel. John ran the wheel for us, however for commercial grinding, he uses an electric motor. The first floor of the mill contains the remnants of a hurst frame and gearing, and newer Meadows Mills for grinding flour and buckwheat for sale. There was also an unusual barrel packer with 3 conical rollers mounted on a shaft from above which rotated and packed material as it was poured in.

•The second floor had some equipment, gears and a bolter, operated from shafts and belts (but with no screens). Throughout the mill was an additional treat -- an installation of display boards, of a study called "Grain into Gold, Milling and Distilling in the Shenandoah". These were recently relocated from the Brownsburg Museum, in nearby Rockbridge County, and enhanced our enjoyment and knowledge of the history of local milling. As we were preparing for the delivery of our lunch to be eaten outside, a sudden downpour forced us to retreat to the nearby Rockbridge Winery, which had a covered pavilion, and gave us the opportunity to purchase some local products of Virginia grapes. [www.rockbridgevineyard.com](http://www.rockbridgevineyard.com)

•After the box lunches, our next stop took us north to the Frontier Culture Museum of Virginia (FCM), a renowned collection of buildings and artifacts that have been relocated from overseas countries from which immigrants and settlers came to populate the American Colonies and the early U.S. Previously limited to European examples, the museum now has a 1700s Ganatastwi Native American exhibit, a 1700's West African Village, along with the



***Wade's Mill Store and Products***

1600s England and 1700s Irish Farm (including a Forge), a 1700's German Farm arrangement, Early American Farms from c. 1820 and c. 1850, and also an 1840s Schoolhouse and the Mt. Tabor African American Church (log structure) c. 1870, relocated from within the Shenandoah Valley.



***Ray Wright, Frontier Museum Curator, discusses the 1600s English livestock shed relocated from Europe and reconstructed at the museum.***

- We saw brick and timber structures, half-timbered structures with wattle-and-daub filled walls, thatched, wood shake or clay-tile roofs, flax-processing methods (for spinning and weaving into linen), and a 12" diameter hand-operated quern mill (of Irish origin).

- Ray Wright, Curator of Historic Buildings for FCM, was our guide on the customized tour, telling the buildings' histories, and sharing his vast experience, including time with actual hands-on dismantling, transportation and reconstruction of these public buildings, homes, barns, stables, and other agricultural structures, from their former locations to the museum grounds. Recent additions have been several log structures including residences, barns and out-buildings, saved from locations in VA, moved and reassembled in the museum.

- Naturally SPOOMers were interested to know "Where is the Grist Mill"? Coincidentally plans are underway to construct a mill. Unfortunately to us, it will be a completely new mill building, rather than a salvaged one. FCM said that they had searched diligently for a re-usable building, without success; we offered our assistance if needed. The site of the mill will be on the side of a hill, with water pumped from above, seemingly inauthentic to us.

- The museum strives to achieve their goal of demonstrating how immigrants became Americans, by the importation and eventual blending of these cultures, methods of building, and lifestyles into the American landscape of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century (1800's). [www.frontiermuseum.org](http://www.frontiermuseum.org).

***12" diameter stone milling quern (hand-operated runner stone) at the Irish Farm, Frontier Museum***



***Historic interpreter shows the evolution of flax into linen at the Frontier Museum's 1700s Irish farm.***



***Demonstration of the 1700s Irish forge at the Frontier Museum.***





•On Friday night, attendees dispersed to dinner on our own, many of us at the Mill Street Grill, the former White Star flour mill, in downtown Staunton.

•On Saturday, April 13, we gathered at the Cyrus McCormick Farm historic site, to visit their buildings and have our semi-annual business meeting. The site is operated as the Shenandoah Valley Agriculture Research and Extension Center, one of several experimental farms operated across the commonwealth by Virginia Tech University. One of the oldest buildings contains a museum to McCormick's invention of the mechanical reaper / harvester in a log structure with a stone foundation. With the original reaper on display, we were amazed at the intricate gearing, driven by the wheels, that was devised for the reaper to cut wheat shafts, with a back-and-forth moving saw blade, as it was pulled along the ground by horsepower. A display case with dozens of scale models described the evolution of the original reaper into the combine / harvester and other machines later in the 19<sup>th</sup>-century.

•The mill is in an adjacent log structure with a wooden waterwheel, fed from a wooden box flume, with pumped recirculating water. It was originally fed from a pond and race from the Marl Creek, where there is now a nature trail. The mill was restored in 1938 using all wooden shafts and gearing. In 1953 the main shaft was replaced with an octagonal steel one, with serviceable roller bearings. Later in 1996 to 98 was a more extensive renovation of the building involving shimming and leveling of the hand-hewn logs, floors and realignment of shafts. The interior is half-consumed by a massive hurst frame, very well crafted, with fine furniture-like details, and mortise / tenon joints with pegs. There had been 2 sets of stones, one for flour and one for agricultural product (cracked corn), for easier separate cleaning. A stone fireplace, with a brick hearth, is centered in the log-wall opposite the hurst frame; the room is decorated with displays and photos.

***McCormick Farm Hurst Frame of sturdy construction, but with furniture-like fine details and mortise/tenon and pegged joinery.***



***McCormick Farm Mill (right) and Reaper Museum (left)***



***Display case of reapers and harvesters (models) developed by Cyrus McCormick in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.***





•The highlight of the morning was a grinding demonstration by Glenn Wilson, their miller and a lifelong resident of the Shenandoah Valley. Glenn has rescued countless historic buildings over decades of his business, principally restoring of log structures. Subsequently, we held our semi-annual meeting, with hot lunch, in the McCormick Farm Barn. Afterward, attendees were free to roam the 600+ acre farm, self-guided, and return home. The 2019 spring tour and meeting was an educational, interesting and memorable review of milling and agriculture, in the beautiful Shenandoah Valley Counties of Augustus and Rockbridge, VA.

[www.ares.vaes.vt.edu/ares/shenandoah-valley.html](http://www.ares.vaes.vt.edu/ares/shenandoah-valley.html)



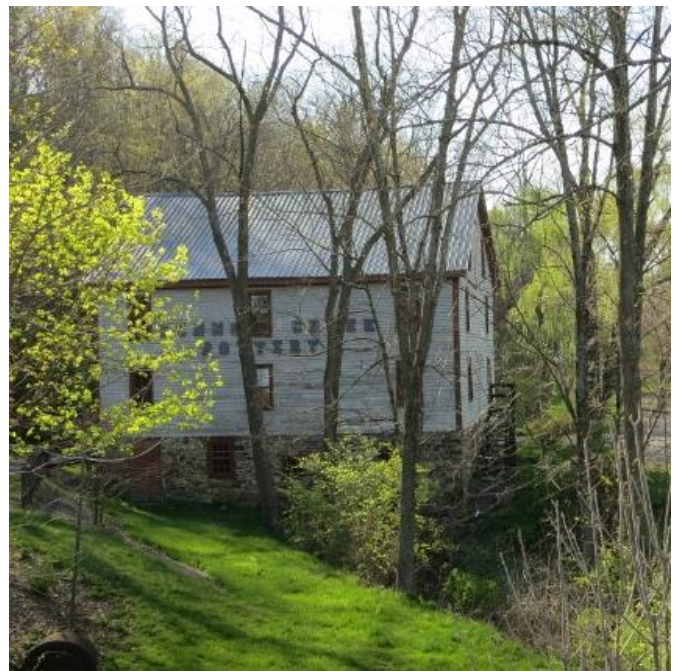
***Miller Glenn Wilson demonstrates water-powered corn grinding at McCormick Farm Mill.***

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### ***Fire Damage at Penns Creek Pottery***

•Bill and Sharon Lynch of Penns Creek Pottery located in Sampsel's Mill, Mifflinburg PA, reported a fire at their mill on May 19, 2019. Lightning struck the ground close to the mill and entered the building on the copper gas line, causing a leak that ignited the gas under the first floor. Forty minutes later a passer-by saw smoke pouring out from under the roof! The local volunteer fire department arrived four minutes after her 911 call and put out the fire. The state fire marshal said that the 'massive sills' under the second floor kept the fire from spreading upward in the wall and that is what saved the building!

•According to the Lynches, the mill has been put back together and looks better than ever, thanks to wonderful cooperation by the Erie insurance company. The disruption made it difficult to produce pottery for awhile, but the undamaged second-floor sales area



remained open during the entire recovery. Bill remarked, "How can you be so unlucky and yet extremely lucky at the same time?"



## Mid-Atlantic Chapter Fall 2019 Meeting

By Steve Childers, Board Member

•The Mid-Atlantic Chapter of SPOOM held its Fall 2019 meeting on September 12 at the old Red Mill in Clinton, New Jersey. The meeting concluded two days of touring mills and other molinology sites in Henderson, Morris, Passic and Essex counties in conjunction with the New England Chapter. Tour arrangements for our thirty plus combined members were made by Amy Boyce, MA chapter and Elizabeth Cole, NE chapter.



•Our Meet and Greet and our first tour took place on Thursday evening at the Asbury Graphite Mill. The original Asbury Grist Mill and the Village of Asbury, in Franklin Township, were both named for Methodist Bishop Francis Asbury and date back to the 1790s. The present 5 story mill was built on the Musconetcong River about 1865 as a grist mill, but thirty years later was converted by Harry Riddle to process graphite. The Riddle family continued graphite production into the 1970s. The mill was gifted to the Musconetcong Watershed Assn. in 1999 and the MWA has made great strides in restoring the building by shoring up the adjoining embankments, replacing timber joists and flooring, and doing masonry work. And let us not forget the hours and hours spent cleaning out all the graphite dust that had accumulated over 80 years.



•Friday morning we all clambered aboard a very comfortable tour bus and headed over to the Ralston Cider Mill in Mendham where we were split into two groups. This group first toured their excellent museum, led by James Malchow, and were introduced to the cider making process by a fine video. We then saw the actual equipment that is still used to make cider once a year. (It was October 12th this year.) Our guide, Alan Hicks, explained the process very clearly and it was amazing how automated it was. After the apples are ground into "cheese" they are loaded into carts in layers separated by cloth. The approximately 4-foot square carts then move on a rail system to the press.



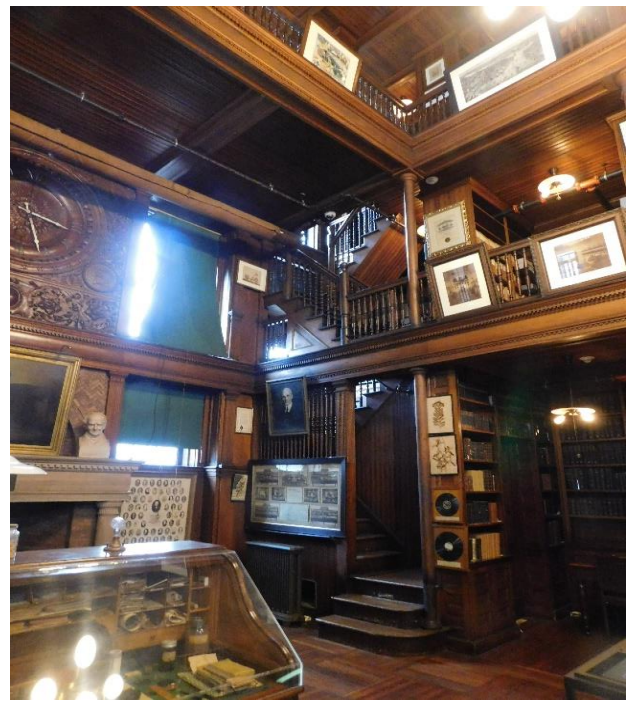


The juice collects in a tray and is piped to the fermentation room. The first distillation is called "Apple Jack" with an alcohol content of 5%, but the second distillation is 90 proof and is known as "Jersey Lightning", no doubt for good reason.



- From Ralston our driver took us to Paterson Great Falls National Historical Park, Paterson, NJ, where the Passaic River drops 77 feet into a basalt gorge, forming the second highest waterfall in the eastern United States. Our tour here was led by a very knowledgeable Gianfranco Archinede, Executive Director for Historical Preservation for the city of Paterson. He explained that by 1838 a low dam above the falls was sending some of the river water into a long, "S" shaped raceway, each leg lower than the first, where water from one leg was diverted to the next leg by way of various mills. The water then continued on down the raceway to be used again and again, eventually returning to the Passaic River. Mills using the raceway water included a continuous roll paper mill, the Rogers Locomotive Works and Colt revolvers, to name just a few.

- In 1914-16 a hydro-electric plant was built below the falls, fed by three 8 ½ foot diameter penstocks and it continues to supply electricity to the area today.



- At Paterson we chose our box lunches and ate them on the bus on the way to our next adventure, the Thomas Edison National Historic Site in West Orange New Jersey. Wow, so much to see and just a couple of hours to see it. Some highlights were Edison's Library where he did much of his research. We all know that Edison was a prolific inventor, he eventually earned 1093 U.S. patents, but it wasn't enough to just come up with new ideas, he turned his ideas into profitable merchandise. To perfect his ideas he had a huge workforce and a large three-story building that contained things like a





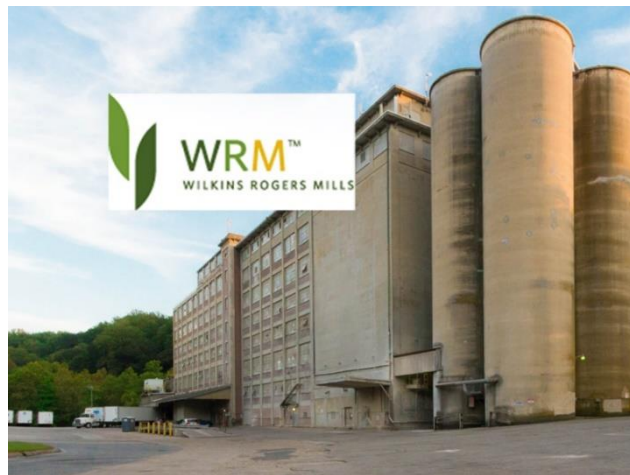
complete machine shop, a recording studio, a motion picture studio, a chemistry lab and much, much more. I, for one, could have spent all day there.



***Red Mill Museum Village in Clinton NJ***

- The next morning we regrouped at the Red Mill Museum Village in downtown Clinton, NJ. The Red Mill has existed since about 1810 and has produced at various times, wool cloth, grist, powered graphite, talc and even electricity for Clinton's streetlamps. After the morning tour we gathered in the conference room where the semi-annual business meeting of the Mid-Atlantic chapter of SPOOM was conducted with chapter president Dan Campbell presiding.

- After lunch many members traveled on their own to Cooper Mill in the Black River Park, Chester Township, New Jersey. The Cooper Mill is the oldest mill still existing in Morris County, built in 1826, and includes a 16-foot Fitz wheel producing about 45 horsepower at 8 rpm. Two sets of grinding stones presently operate, one for flour and one for cornmeal, and can produce about 800 lbs. an hour. The mill is set up so that visitors can easily see the flow of material by means of an open-sided auger, elevators with clear viewing windows and an open-sided bolter.



***MD's Last Flour Mill in Ellicott City to Close***

By [Patch](#) - October 22, 2019

- A longtime Ellicott City business will be closing its doors in early 2020. Wilkins-Rogers Inc. will be shutting down its flour mill and relocate production somewhere in the business, according to [Baking Business](#). The company also has mills in Mount Joy, and Palmyra, Pa.
- With this closure, Maryland will lose its last commercial grain mill. The mill established roots in 1774 by the Ellicott brothers. Last year, the mill managed to escape widespread flooding that seeped into the city. The Ellicott City mill produces flour and started producing private label flours for retail grocers in the 1970s. It has numerous flour-packing lines and is capable of producing and delivering flours and corn meals for commercial businesses of all sizes all along the eastern seaboard.



***Cooper's Grist Mill in Chester Township NJ***

## **Mid-Atlantic Chapter Society for the Preservation of Old Mills**

**September 14, 2019**

**Semiannual Meeting**

Red Mill, Clinton, NJ

President Dan Campbell called the meeting to order at 10:55 A.M. and thanked Elizabeth Cole and Amy Boyce for their diligent work in hosting the conference and organizing the tours. He also announced that Nate Bond, a member of the Board and long-term SPOOM-MA member, had died in early August.

**Minutes** of the April 13, 2019 meeting at Cyrus McCormick Farm, Raphine, VA were distributed by e-mail prior to the meeting and paper copies were available. Steve Childers moved that the minutes be approved as distributed. The motion was seconded by Charles Yeske and approved unanimously.

**Finance:** Treasurer Judy Grove presented the finance report as of September 12, 2019. The beginning bank balance as of January 1 was \$16,819.39. Since then there have been receipts of \$3394.00 and expenses of \$6427.09, producing an ending bank balance of \$13,786.30. These figures do not include expenses of the fall meeting nor does it include all payments for the meeting. The chapter PayPal account has a balance of \$1900.11, which represents fall meeting payments and a few memberships. Total cash assets of the chapter are \$15,686.41.

**Membership:** Judy Grove reported that current paid memberships were down slightly from the spring. Subsequent to the meeting she provided an updated report showing 32 chapter/SPOOM members (\$10), 3 chapter/non-SPOOM (\$15) members, 25 sustaining members (\$25), and 11 organizational members for a total of 70 members. Website subscribers total 130.

**Project Reports:** For more than five years, the Muddy Creek Forks Roller Mills has been seeking a permanent home for a complete Wolf Level Sifter saved more than 20 years ago from the Silver Spring Mill in Mechanicsville, PA. Craig Sansonetti reported that, thanks to contacts made at this year's national SPOOM conference at Prater's Mill, Dalton, GA, the level sifter will be transferred to the Broyles, Bashor, and Bennett Mill in Broylesville, TN. Planning is underway to make this transfer in October.

### **Old Business**

**SPOOM Mid-Atlantic Grants:** The chapter has paid out the \$4000 grant to the Muddy Creek Forks Roller Mills authorized at the spring meeting. Craig Sansonetti reported on the project to move four double roll stands from the Hawk Mill in Allentown, PA, to Muddy Creek Forks. All preparations were in place to move the roll stands on August 7th. Unfortunately, the rigger contracted to handle the move was injured in a work-related accident a few days before the scheduled move, which had to be postponed. A move date in October is now expected.

No new requests for grant support were presented.

**Tax-Exempt Status for Chapter:** Bob McLaughlin reported that, due to personal considerations, no additional progress has been made in seeking tax-exempt status for the chapter. He is now ready to begin work on the application process.

**Newsletter Editor:** No issue of the chapter newsletter has yet been prepared in 2019. Megan Orient, newsletter editor, has been too busy to get it done, and we have no vice-president, the officer with responsibility for writing about chapter activities. No one agreed to take on the position of editor. Steve Childers and Judy Grove agreed to try to prepare the next issue.

### **New Business**

**Election of Officers and Directors:** Under provisions of the chapter by-laws, regular elections were to be held for secretary, treasurer, and two directors. In addition, it was necessary to fill the vice-president position left vacant by the resignation of Adam Sieminski and the director at large position vacated by the death of Nate Bond. Treasurer Judy Grove, Secretary Craig Sansonetti, and



Directors at Large Charles Yeske and Megan Orient agreed to stand for re-election to their current positions. Susan Langley had agreed prior to the meeting to accept nomination for the vacant director at large position. After discussion, Ivan Lufriu agreed to stand for election as vice-president. Dan Campbell submitted this slate to vote of the membership, which unanimously approved its election. Ivan Lufriu and Susan Langley will take up their positions immediately to fill out the unexpired terms to which they were elected.

**Future Meetings:** Batsto Village in the Pinelands of New Jersey is a possibility for a future meeting. It is an iron-processing village with a grist mill and a saw mill. They do not understand their saw mill, and Bob Hemler has agreed to look at it. Dan Campbell and Charles Yeske have spoken with a ranger about the prospects for a meeting there.

Shank's Mill in Franklin County, PA, might also be a possibility. Judy Grove will contact Adrian Shank to see if he would be willing to organize a meeting. Ivan Lufriu noted that there are two Shank's Mills and that we should try to see both.

Steve Childers noted that Charlestown Mill in Chester County, PA, has recently been restored. It might be a candidate for a future meeting.

It was also suggested that the Coatesville/Downingtown area with Lukens Steel, the Iron and Steel Museum, and the Bondsville Mill might be a good place to meet. Dan Campbell suggested that the Mill at Anselma might be able to host a meeting in this area.

**Activities at Locke's Mill:** Roger Steyaert reported that he is now the miller at Locke's Mill, which is owned by Sandra Lerner. The mill is doing a lot of work for distilleries and major upgrades are being made. One set of stones has been certified organic. Two additional run of stones are being installed as well as a large sifter and a roller mill and fanning mill for oats. Ben Hassett will be installing these modifications in late October. The mill will have an open house for SPOOM members in the spring of 2020. Roger will send information to Judy Grove for dissemination to the membership.

**Eastern Shore Mills:** Steve Childers reported on the status of Abbott's Mill and Cooch-Dyatt mill, which are owned by the state of Delaware. Abbott's Mill was restored about 25 years ago. Sills of its turbine well sustained termite damage, which was recently repaired. They have also restored the 20 hp diesel engine that ran the roller mills, and now run the roller mills once each month. The state is rethinking its use of the Cooch-Dyatt site, and there is no longer access there for mill tours. Steve is also doing drawings for Wye Mills and meeting with Frank McKelvey to work on interpretation of the mill.

Steve is also looking for a small turbine for display at Abbott's Mill. Craig Sansonetti noted that two turbines are buried at the High Rock Mill near Muddy Creek Forks. Craig is helping Eric Clarke of Cotton Hill Mill in Fayette County West Virginia get access to the mill site. Eric has an interest in trying to salvage the turbines.

**Equipment Available:** Charles Yeske reported that he has two scourers, a bagger, and other miscellaneous equipment available to a good home. He also has free past issues of Old Mill News. National SPOOM is in need of a bookstore manager.

**2020 National Conference:** Amy Boyce is organizing the 2020 national SPOOM meeting to be held October 1-3 in Massachusetts. She invited everyone to put it on their calendars and plan to attend.

There being no further business Charles Yeske moved that the meeting be adjourned. The motion was seconded by Amy Boyce and was adopted unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at approximately noon.

Respectfully submitted,  
Craig Sansonetti, Secretary

717-862-3259 [sansonet@erols.com](mailto:sansonet@erols.com)

## SPOOM Mid-Atlantic 2019 Year End Finance Report

STARTING BALANCE 1/1/2019			\$ 16,819.39
INCOME			
10 Membership Income	\$ 830.00		
20 Donations	\$ 2.00		
30 Spring Meeting Payments	\$ 2,139.00		
40 Fall Meeting Registrations	\$ 2,521.00		
50 Other Income			
TOTAL INCOME		\$ 5,492.00	
INCOME PLUS STARTING BALANCE			\$ 22,311.39
EXPENSES			
35 Spring Meeting Expenses	\$ 1,542.00		
45 Fall Meeting Expenses	\$ 2,831.15		
55 Mill and SPOOM Project Support	\$ 4,000.00		
65 Website Costs	\$ 629.40		
75 PayPal Fees	\$ 81.93		
85 Other Expenses (Insurance)	\$ 373.00		
95 Postage & Office	\$ 44.99		
TOTAL EXPENSES		\$ 9,502.47	
ENDING BANK ACCOUNT BALANCE 4/10/2019			\$ 12,808.92
PAYPAL ACCOUNT BALANCE			\$ 38.23
TOTAL SPOOM MA CASH ASSETS			\$ 12,847.15

### **Hosting a Chapter Meeting**

The SPOOM MA Board is happy to entertain suggestions for new locations for our spring and fall meetings. Here are the key steps to consider in the planning process:

- Identify unique or interesting sites, personnel, and potential partnership resources in your area.
- Select a theme, date, and host hotel that would fit your site.
- Plan a schedule that would best accommodate the size, location & features of your sites. Generally, the format that has worked well is Thursday night Meet & Greet at a local site or restaurant; Friday tours of local mills, historic sites or other places of interest; and a Saturday chapter business meeting with tour and/or speakers at the host site.
- Use contacts with prospective sites and vendors for meals and transportation to plan registration costs.

Would you like to host a chapter meeting in your area? If so, contact President Dan Campbell [campbelldt@verizon.net](mailto:campbelldt@verizon.net) or Registrar Judy Grove [judygrove@Verizon.net](mailto:judygrove@Verizon.net) with your proposed dates and location. Dan and Judy will assist with logistics, registration, publicity, and answer questions based on their past experiences with chapter meeting planning.



## ***Roll Stands Make the Move to Muddy Creek Forks . . . Thank you, SPOOM-MA!***

By Craig Sansonetti

- When you are preserving a mill that has "Muddy Creek Forks Roller Mills" emblazoned across its walls in huge letters, the need to portray and interpret the roller mill process for producing high quality white flour is inescapable. But what do you do if key equipment is no longer in the mill?
- For many years the Maryland & Pennsylvania Railroad Preservation Society searched for roller mill equipment representative of that removed from our mill in Muddy Creek Forks when white flour production ended in the 1940s. The most obvious missing elements were the four double roll stands that did the grinding and the oscillatory sifting machines that controlled the flow of product through the milling process. Finding this kind of vintage equipment is not easy. Personal contacts developed through SPOOM were key to the search.
- In 2009 Phil Robertson, an internationally known expert on roller mills that we met through SPOOM, told us about a single Barnard & Leas roll stand that was for sale in Nebraska. It wasn't exactly what we wanted, but it was close. We purchased it, shipped it to Pennsylvania, and installed it in our mill where it became the central feature of our roller mill interpretation, but we continued to look for a full set of four roll stands that would more accurately represent those used at Muddy Creek Forks.
- A breakthrough came in 2016 at a meeting of the SPOOM Mid-Atlantic Chapter where Jeff Donat told us of four small roll stands at the Hawk Mill in Allentown, PA. Owner Tim McDaniel wanted the equipment removed to make space for other uses, but he did not want to scrap it. We visited the Hawk Mill and found four 6"x12" double roll stands built in about 1900. Their size, vintage, and type A drive configuration were exactly what we were looking for.
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- Tim McDaniel was willing to donate the roll stands to our Society but, at 1500 pounds each, moving them to Muddy Creek Forks was going to be costly and challenging. They were on the second floor of the mill and would have to be removed through a door almost seven feet above ground level with a width that would clear by just one inch.



**Photo 1: Careful rigging was required to assure that the full weight of the roll stands was carried on the cast base with no force applied to the bearings or wooden feeder section**

- When you have a museum with ten buildings and 3.6 miles of railroad to maintain, there are many competing priorities. As a result, plans to move the roll stands languished. The situation was made much worse by an August 2018 flash flood that inundated our mill and did \$217,000 in damage to our village and railroad. This spring an important factor arose to produce a renewed sense of urgency -- Jeff Donat advised us that another group was expressing interest in the equipment at Hawk Mill. We were determined to make the move, but where would we get the money? SPOOM-MA played the essential role in breathing new life into the project. At the spring 2019 meeting, Judy Grove reported that the chapter had more money in the bank than needed for its regular operations and suggested a grant be made to help finance the roller mill move. Her suggestion received strong backing, and, to our amazement, we left with the promise of a \$4000 grant to finance the move.

- With designated funds in hand we set out to pin down the details. It was clear that a capable rigger would be needed to remove the roll stands from the Hawk Mill. We contracted with Reb Scavone and his Middletown Repair Shop to do the job. With decades of experience in moving and installing heavy equipment, Reb seemed well suited for the job. All arrangements were made, and necessary rental equipment reserved to do the job on August 7th.
- But then, less than a week before the scheduled date, Reb sustained an injury on another job, and we were forced to postpone the move. What was originally expected to be a two-week delay stretched into months. Not until early November did the doctors clear Reb for work.
- On November 14 all was again ready. Using a rented forklift and a crane of his own design that mounted to the forks, Reb threaded the four mills through the second-floor door at Hawk Mill without so much as a scratch on the trim. They were loaded onto a U-Haul truck and by the end of a long day were parked outside our mill in Muddy Creek Forks. The following day was devoted to unloading and placing the mills along the walls of our grain elevator. There they are accessible for restoration and viewable in a building regularly open to the public.
- Two of the four roll stands had been partially disassembled by Jeff Donat years ago in an ultimately unsuccessful attempt to move them to the Whitehall Historic Preservation Society's Helfrich Springs Gristmill. Fortunately, Jeff had taken a very systematic approach and all parts removed were tagged for identification, so we are confident we have everything needed to reassemble all four stands. In the meantime, the fact that two are partially disassembled may be an advantage for interpretation, as portions of the mechanism that are not generally visible can be readily seen and discussed with visitors.



**Photo 2:** Both horizontally and vertically, the clearance was very tight.



**Photo 3:** Reb Scavone's skill in handling the forklift and the fork-mounted crane that he designed were key to safely removing the roll stands from the second floor of Hawk Mill.

- Before the roll stands can take their rightful place in our mill, substantial structural work will be needed to assure that the building can safely handle their weight. Having found appropriate mills, however, and assured their preservation by moving them to Muddy Creek Forks, is a very significant step toward a more complete restoration and interpretation of our mill.





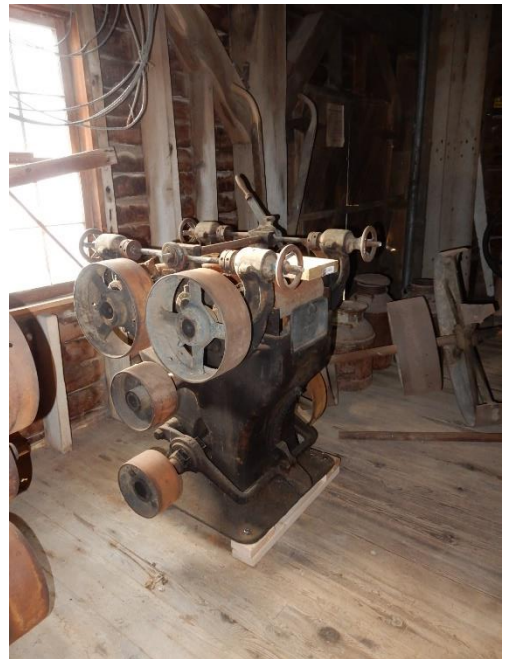
**Photo 4: The best of the four stands is almost fully intact and provides a good model for reassembly and restoration of the other stands.**



**Photo 5: Muddy Creek Forks Roller Mills showing emblazoned logo.**



**Photo 6: The most complete stand safely installed inside the Grain elevator at Muddy Creek Forks.**



**Photo 7: A partially disassembled stand with the feeder section removed gives a good view of the rolls and adjustments that are normally hidden.**

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