

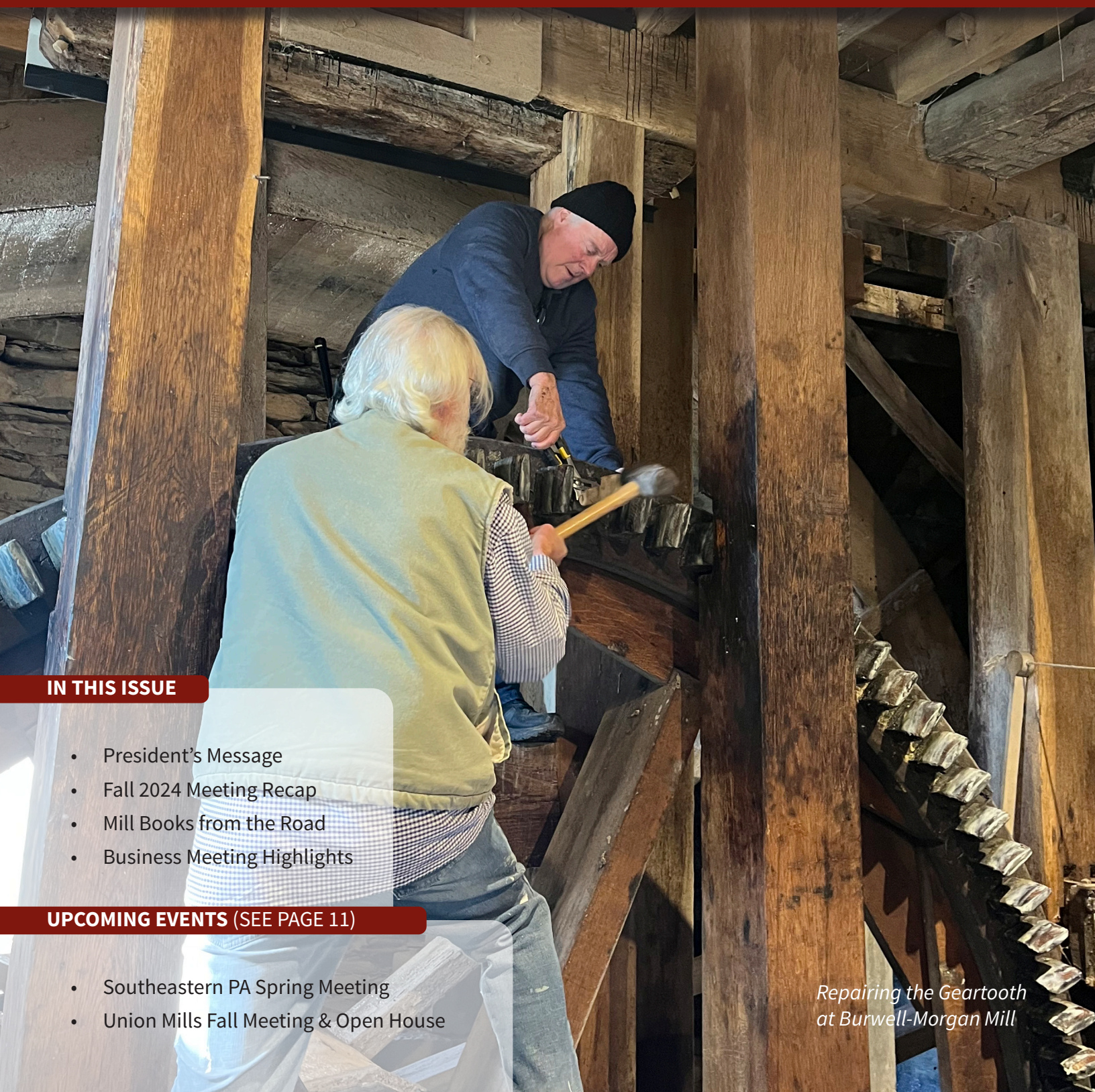


# SPOOM

*Semiannual  
Newsletter*

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

*Fall  
2024  
Edition*



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## UPCOMING EVENTS (SEE PAGE 11)

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- Union Mills Fall Meeting & Open House

*Repairing the Geartooth  
at Burwell-Morgan Mill*

## SPOOM-MA Chapter

613 Green Valley Road  
York, PA 17403 USA

717-741-4366

[www.spoommidatlantic.org](http://www.spoommidatlantic.org)  
[spoommidatlantic@gmail.com](mailto:spoommidatlantic@gmail.com)

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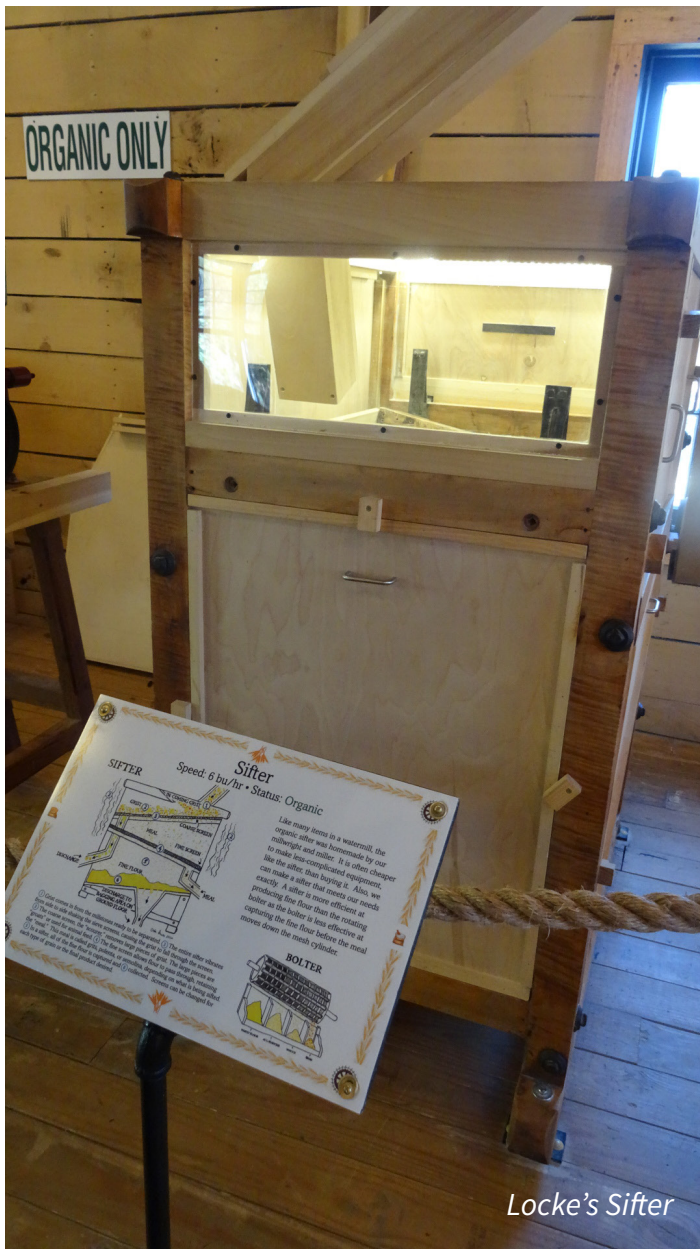
*Waterford Foundation Mill*

## President's Message December 2024

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When I was a young boy, my mother sang a little song that went: "Make new friends, but keep the old - one is silver and the other is gold". Our recent sojourn to mills in the northern Shenandoah and western Potomac valleys of Virginia and West Virginia, reminded me of those relationships - older and newer.

During the COVID pandemic aftermath, I made some new (silver) friends, in the persons of Adam and Shannon Thomas, who were acquaintances of my WV cousin, and they gave me a quick tour of Shepherdstown Mill - already converted to a home, after they bought the property several years ago. I didn't know then, how dedicated to SPOOM-MA they would become with Adam attending a few of our meetings since then, as they continued to renovate the mill / home, while maintaining the remaining milling equipment inside the building and the enormous steel wheel alongside.



*Locke's Sifter*



*Locke's Mill Gearing*

to see how the wheat and corn are kept separate on the “organic-raised” and the “standard-raised” sides of the milling and bagging operations. Tim Richards, their miller, and Chris Damewood, farm manager, gave us a thorough tour of the operation, including a gift bag of their products, for each of us. It was great to see the earlier plans for the organic conversion to be completed at this “old friend mill” which has become “newer”. Following that, we visited the nearby Ayrshire Farm, which is the center of the Gentle Harvest operation, raising free-range animals organically, for their food products.

After a few short years Adam and Shannon were very gracious to host us for a tour and snacks at our usual meet and greet on Thursday night, before our group dinner and retiring to our hotel.

Our Friday tour visit started us at Locke's Mill on the Shenandoah, where old (gold) friends John and Carol Joyce had renovated the mill for about 20 years, until a decade ago. Naturally we had visited there on both SPOOM Mid-Atlantic and SPOOM National trips in the past. When Sandy Lerner of Gentle Harvest purchased the site and building about 10 years ago, we visited to hear about her early plans to convert the operation to using organic products and methods. Those conversions are complete now, and it was interesting

A special new friend to round-out Friday was the Waterford Foundation. The 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century history of Waterford VA is well known, but I became aware of the Waterford Mill about 10 years ago when the Waterford Foundation was seeking a preservation architect and engineering team to study the building and recommend structural stabilization and restoration. A comprehensive report was written and much of the work has now been implemented with repairs and interpretation of the milling process, with the hurst frame repaired in place, and evidence of the millstone's



*Waterford Foundation Waterwheel*

locations, indicated on the restored wooden floorboards. The mill was central to Waterford history and now the building is safe and open for interpretation to the public, as well as for other functions. Susan Manch, director of the Foundation was willing to show us the village and the mill at the conclusion of our Friday tours.

Another old (gold) friend was on our tour schedule for Saturday in the form of Burwell-Morgan Mill in Millwood, VA. Both SPOOM-MA and SPOOM (national) have visited there before, for demonstration grinding and use of their spacious second floor room with fireplace. An unfortunate event happened earlier in that week, when a cog (tooth) on their main pinion gear broke, so it had to be replaced before they could demonstration-grind for us. But a benefit for us, was that we were able to witness the replacement of that cog, before the grinding of corn. Also, the runner stone had been removed so we witnessed the procedure of reinstalling that over the bedstone, and assembly of the hoop, and mill furniture, prior to grinding. The mill is now using a new timber crane, which was recently built by Ben Hassett, who is wisely kept on retainer by Clarke County Parks, for scheduled visits and maintenance, in the mill. SPOOM national recently awarded Burwell-Morgan a grant of money to assist with rebuilding their headrace gate. They continue to gain new friends in the

form of volunteers to maintain and demonstrate the mill, and we were introduced to a few young persons, doing that at Burwell-Morgan.

You'll see information about the SPOOM-MA Board of Directors (annual fall election) later in this newsletter. I am thankful for our "old friends" Angela Kramer and Steve Childers for standing for re-election to the Board. Speaking of "new friends" on the Board, Matthew Pyle (Matt) of York County, PA has been attending our events for a few times in the recent past, and then accepted nomination to the Board. He was newly elected and will serve the usual 2-year term. Matt has experience in the hydro-generation of electricity, which is a possible adaptive re-use for suitable mills in the future.

Our Fall 2024 meeting was well attended, but there is "always room for one-more", so if you are reading this and are either an old friend, or a new friend, please attend our next conference in Spring 2025. And if you are an old friend, then bring a new one with you!

Thanks,

*Daniel T. Campbell*

—Dan Campbell



*Shepherd's Mill Town Run Water Source*



*Burwell-Morgan Mill*



*Burwell-Morgan Mill, showing the missing cog before being replaced (see cover photo).*



Group at Locke's Mill Waterwheel

## Fall 2024 Meeting Recap

### **SHEPHERD'S GRIST MILL**

*(207 East High Street, Shepherdstown, WV)*

In 2020, Adam and Shannon Thomas visited Shepherd Grist Mill and together realized “that this place had us written all over it! We really fell in love with it, right away.” Four years later, on Thursday, November 7, they welcomed our SPOOM Mid-Atlantic group to their home and shared the history and evolution of the mill. A short walk from the parking area at the quaint train station brought us to the site.

Built some time before 1739 by Thomas Shepherd, the mill still stands on Town Run in Shepherdstown WV. Fed by more than twenty natural



Shepherd's Grist Mill

springs, the Run meanders through backyards, under houses, across alleys and beneath five streets, providing a reliable flow of water, before it rushes downward to the Potomac. In the late 19th century, the original wooden water wheel, located inside the mill, was replaced with a 40-foot Fitz Steel Overshot water wheel outside the mill. Over the life of the mill, it was used as grist mill, grinding corn, meal, cotton seed, flour, bran, cracked corn, middlings, and more. It was also a lumber mill for ten years.

Nancy and Ira Glackens restored the mill in the early 1970's. Today, Adam and Shannon are doing their best to preserve and maintain this property and their residence, but with a very small footprint, in case somebody in the future wanted to turn it back into a mill.

The historic nature of the mill is evident in the original stone and wood features and an open vaulted ceiling with lots of light that remain. Much of its original millworks are still in the basement and one set of original burr stones and hoop now serve as a coffee table in the living room. A new exterior spiral staircase connects the upper two floors. Two bedrooms and a kitchen overlooking the stunning water source were added along with two lofts above the upper floor. In the process, traces of a catwalk used by the mill overseer to check the wheel in operation were discovered. This inspired Adam to rebuild the catwalk to connect the two lofts.

The final result of the renovations is a comfortable living and entertaining space that has brought new life and attention to this historic structure. The couple is hoping to complete much-needed repairs to the Fitz Water Wheel and related structures, with the help of grant funding and donations from the local community.

*–Adam Thomas and Judy Grove*

## **BAVARIAN INN**

*(164 Shepherd Grade Road, Shepherdstown WV)*

On Thursday night twenty guests gathered for dinner at the historic Bavarian Inn in Shepherdstown, WV. For over 45 years, the Asam family



has operated this 11-acre European Inspired Boutique Resort overlooking the Potomac River. Features include 72 luxury rooms, a brewpub, lounge, and outdoor beer garden. The Bavarian Inn, having recently opened their brewery, carried on the legacy of the Asam brothers who built churches in Germany. Asamkirche was built in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and gets its name from architect Egid Quirin Asam, who lived in the house next door to the soon-to-be-constructed church. Egid and his brother, Cosmas, built the church as their personal place of worship with the intention of being buried in the tomb underneath the chapel. Bavarian Brother's Brewing adopted as their logo the "star" used on the front door of churches built by their Asam ancestors.

*–Adam Thomas and Judy Grove*

## **LOCKE'S MILL**

*(1600 Locke's Mill Rd., Berryville, VA)*

We started our morning under clear blue skies, crisp temperatures, and flame-colored leaves; in all, a day much more characteristic of October than November. Within hours, it was short-sleeve weather. Arriving at the mill, we were greeted by Tim Richards who is not only the miller, but wears many hats as the Operations Specialist for Ayrshire Farm, as both are under the ownership of philanthropist Sandra Lerner. Farm Manager Christopher Damewood acted as guide and interpreter for our tour of the mill.



*Locke's Mill Organic Grain Processing Equipment*

We learned that the mill has been documented as operational in 1751 and in the ownership of the prominent Carter family who conveyed the land to George Washington's brother-in-law, Col. Fielding Lewis. A mill accounts book shows the name of Lewis and indicates that there were two mills on the site in January 1777: an Upper Mill and a Lower Mill; one ground oats and Indian corn and the other ground rye and wheat. The mill complex suffered extensively from flooding. Today there is an upright "gauge" of sorts by the wheel indicating the dates of floods and the heights the waters reached. The mill is not shown on maps from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century but it is not clear if this was an omission or if the mill was defunct during the Civil War. In 1875, the mill was rebuilt and named after Joseph and Mary Price. It passed through another owner named Wilson and was purchased by Thomas and Rosa Locke in 1907 and operated until 1935 although it was not

sold until 1946. The mill, reduced to mere foundations from successive floods, was purchased by Carol Sigler in 1992 and she, and her husband Jon Joyce, restored the mill with the expertise of noted millwrights Ben Hassett and Derek Ogden, metalwork restoration by Ken Kephart, sawyer William Callahan, and Mike Gerbowski handling the excavation. Sandra Lerner bought the mill in 2016 and had it certified organic in 2017.

Like many mills that adapted to stay viable, the mill had installed roller mill equipment. It has been restored back to its original configuration of two sets of French buhr millstones and one section of the mill is dedicated to milling organic products and the other section is used for commercial or standard milling. The mill does not rely on the adjacent Shenandoah River as it has a reliable spring and a small millpond is used, which dates to the late twentieth/early twenty-first century as a substitute for the original



pond. Because the lot size is limited and the new millpond is small, water is mechanically pumped from the millpond into the wooden trestle flume to ensure there is an adequate flow to turn the 23-foot wooden waterwheel. The mill is on both the National Register of Historic Places and the Virginia Landmarks Register.

There is extensive signage throughout the mill and a lot of photographs were taken. In addition to being open to the public on the first and third Saturdays from March through November (11am-4pm), there is an emphasis on education and both classes and homeschool students are welcome and encouraged to undertake field trips to the mill. The product diversity is amazing with 12 types of grain flours, including some less common varieties, and 8 types of cornmeal and grits, plus baking mixes. The mill supplies organic restaurants, distilleries, and other busi-

nesses both commercial and organic, as well as selling to the public in person or online. Recipes are also available on the mill's website (<https://www.lockesmillgrains.com/recipes>) and there are also really informative videos about grain science. Just to make certain we were able to continue enjoying our mill experience, we were gifted with a bag containing four one-pound bags of grits and flours, recipe cards and postcards.

-Susan Langley

## AYRSHIRE FARMS

(21846 Trappe Road, Upperville, VA)

After the Mid-Atlantic SPOOM tour gathered at Locke's Mill to learn more about the organic grain milling lovingly performed there, we moved on to Ayrshire Farm, also owned by Sandra Lerner.

It is here, at Ayrshire Farm, where Sandy is moving forward her mission to bring heritage live-stock and crop production to both self-sufficiency and profitability.

Our group followed the capable and generous farm manager, Chris Damewood, around the property to learn more. He explained that the soil is constantly amended with cover crops and compost from their three-acre compost facility. We welcomed the chance to walk amidst the woods with free grazing pigs (Gloucestershire Old Spots) and turkeys, and learn a little more about their sustainable farming methods. We toured the grand stables where we were shown a variety of historic carriages (used daily!) and met a few beautiful Shires which compete in draft and carriage shows around the country. As a part of their training, the Ayrshire Shires help in the constant task of soil improvement, keeping the skills of horse-powered farming alive.

We enjoyed a wonderful meal prepared by our hosts at the farm while we held both a board member and membership meeting. The result of this attention and effort of care for the animals and to the land while preserving historic milling and farming methods resulted in terrific food and community at our meeting table.

-Lisa Reed





*Looking at the Waterford Foundation Mill Race*



*Sue Manch giving the tour*

## **WATERFORD FOUNDATION**

*(40222 Fairfax Street, Waterford, VA)*

On November 8, Susan Manch, President of the Waterford Foundation, led conference attendees on a fascinating twilight walking tour of this unique Virginia town. We learned that Waterford, once known as Janney's Mill, was founded around 1733, when Amos Janney built a gristmill on Catoclin Creek. Janney, like many of the village's residents, was Quaker. Waterford was also home to free and enslaved African Americans, and later, Irish immigrants. In the 1790s, the town borrowed a new name from the town of Waterford, Ireland.

In the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, many of Waterford's residents were abolitionists and pacifists. During the Civil War, this small village chose not to secede from the Union. The area saw intense fighting during the war, and locals helped enslaved indi-

viduals escape north. After the war, Waterford's neighbors punished the town for its refusal to join the Confederate cause by building railroads to bypass Waterford. This isolation eventually contributed to the village's decline.

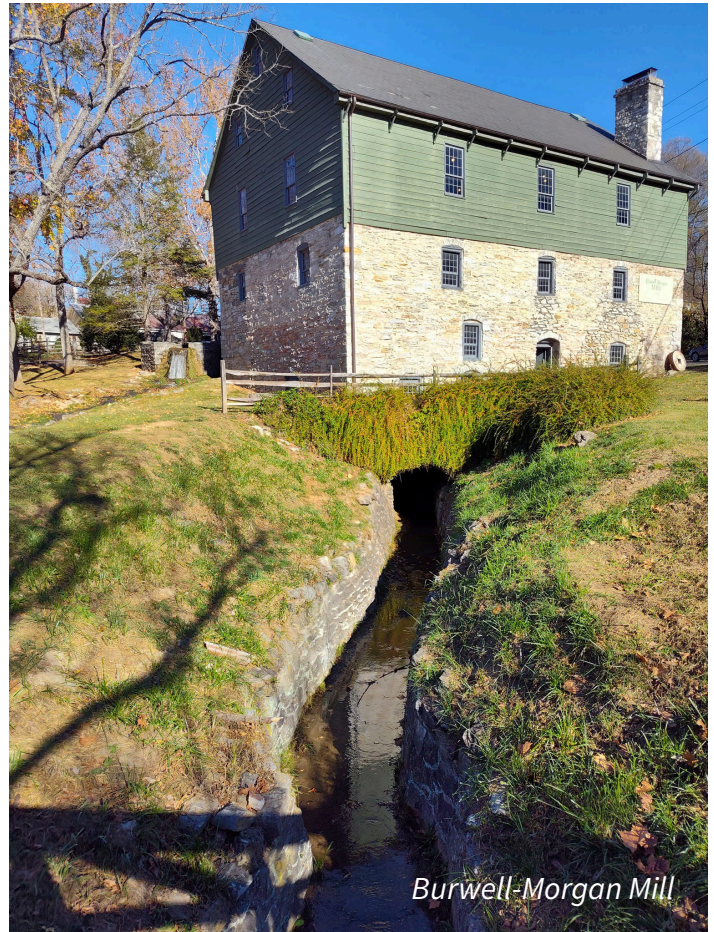
Waterford became a National Historic Landmark in 1970; the Waterford Foundation was established in 1974 to preserve the village and its distinctive rural setting. The SPOOM-Mid-Atlantic walking tour included Ms. Manch's home on the main street. Ms. Manch explained that this brick dwelling was once two separate houses, occupied by a father and son who took opposite sides during the Civil War.

The SPOOM-MA group also visited the Second Street School, built in 1867 to serve the town's African American children. Ms. Manch explained how the Waterford Foundation restored the one-room schoolhouse, one of the oldest schools in Loudon County. The Foundation also researched the lives of the children who once studied there. Today, children visit Second Street School on field trips, where they learn what a school day was like in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

We ended our tour of Waterford at the mill, where Ms. Manch detailed the Foundation's efforts to restore the three-and-a-half story brick building. Built in 1818, the building replaced Janney's original gristmill and continued to operate until 1939. Over the years, the Waterford Mill has been modified extensively.

The building had fallen into disrepair until recently, when the Foundation worked with the National Trust for Historic Preservation to complete a \$1.6 million restoration in August 2023. They devised a plan to keep water out of the building and to excavate the old tailrace. They rebuilt the Hurst frame and crafted wooden inlays to show the original locations of millstones. The old mill is now used as a community space, and the Foundation is making plans to rebuild the waterwheel.

—Angela Kramer, *Friends of Peirce Mill*



## THE BURWELL-MORGAN MILL

(15 Tannery Lane, Millwood, VA)

After two days of magnificent weather, most of us set out for the **Burwell-Morgan Mill** on Saturday morning with our jackets on. The Millwood, Virginia mill dates back to 1785, a business partnership between Revolutionary War Col. Nathaniel Burwell and Brig. Gen. Daniel Morgan. Wheat flour from the mill was shipped via the nearby Shenandoah River to Harper's Ferry and to the markets beyond. After the mill ceased operating during WWII, the Clarke County Historical Association restored it and opened it to the public as a museum. The Burwell-Morgan Mill is open from May 11<sup>th</sup> to November 16<sup>th</sup> on Fridays and Sundays 12-5, and on Saturdays (grinding days) 10-5. Our visit was on the last day they would be open to the public in 2024.

Upon arriving, we learned that there was a broken tooth on the huge pit-wheel that would have to be replaced before grinding could begin. The trained Burwell-Morgan millers, all volunteers, set to work removing the broken cog and fitting

a new one, with the help of the on-duty furniture maker and his tools.

The mill is entirely staffed by volunteers, many of which are teenagers as young as thirteen. One of their most enthusiastic young volunteers that day was eighteen-year-old Nolan Chastain, a third-generation volunteer at the mill, who was helping with the corn grinding and was doing the corn meal bagging. Throughout the season the mill grinds and sells all manner of grains and buckwheat, and corn in all colors, patriotic red, white and blue, as well as the yellow corn they would be grinding this day. The mill has two pairs of millstones, one strictly for corn and the other set aside for grains.

While repairs to the pit-wheel were being made, most of us took advantage of the time to visit the three demonstrations that were going on upstairs. A well-versed Black lady, in a beautiful, traditional, “enslaved woman’s dress” told all about the fabrics and clothing that would have been used by the enslaved people. She had many interesting samples of both the fabric and the simple designs.

Also on hand was a furniture-maker that talked about how his hand-made Federal-Style chairs were built. He explained how tenons and mortises are laid out and chiseled and how the other chair parts are shaped. He also explained and demonstrated the innovative treadle lathe that he had personally designed and built.

Over in the far corner of the room is a huge, stone fireplace that had a nice cooking fire going. The two men demonstrating had an iron pot of pork neck-bones cooking, to which they intended to add cabbage once the meat was done. Later they would be frying up the big batch of chicken drumsticks they had on hand and, to top the meal



off, cornmeal from the corn that would be freshly ground downstairs. I wish I could have stayed all afternoon.

As soon as the repairs were completed, a mouse was discovered trapped in the corn bin, so, of course, it had to be evicted first. When water was finally allowed in, the mill became alive and instantly it seemed as if there was something going on everywhere. The pit-wheel was turning the lantern gear, which was causing the runner stone above to spin about 120 RPM. Corn was allowed in and grinding began. An interesting feature of this mill’s works, to this observer, was the mechanism that shakes the sifter. A long arm, pivoted in the center, rides on a cam on the mill-stone shaft and the other end is attached to the shaker screen. This shakes the screen about 120 times a minute. Simple, but it works very effectively.

Of the five sites that we visited over three days, it would be difficult to pick a favorite. They were all very interesting and worth the many miles we drove between them.

–Steve Childers

# Mill Books from the Road

Interestingly enough, these three milling books all surfaced during this Fall Meeting. All are worthy of your consideration. Book titles, brief descriptions, and potential purchase sources are listed below their location during our event.

## On Adam Thomas' millstone coffee table at Shepherd's Mill:

*Historic Mills of West Virginia* By Tracy Lawson (2022) provides a delightful, well-organized trip into milling and the mills of this great state. It serves not only as an outstanding guide to the remaining mills of West Virginia, but also as a testament to creative ways for preserving these historic buildings. For serious researchers, the book is thoroughly footnoted. 542 pages. (Available new and used on Amazon)

## On display at Burwell Morgan Mill:

*Historic Mills of America* By Lynda Fralish (2000) is a fascinating read for anyone interested in the history of the United States. This first edition contains 350 pages full of information about mills organized by state. The book is authored by the Society for the Preservation of Old Mills Staff and is written in English. (Apparently out of stock but available used on eBay)



Shepherd's Mill Table

## Recommended by Bill Zartman whose family mill is in the book:

*Mills of Lancaster County* By Donald Kautz. This 382-page book, organized by watershed, contains the full catalog of mills past and present with pictures, details and timelines along with a narrative description of each of the mills that still exist in some form today. Finally, there is a list of millers' names indexed with their mills and dates of ownership. (\$43.10 with tax and shipping 610-286-0258 Masthof Press & Bookstore, 219 Mill Rd, Morgantown PA 19543-9516)

-Judy Grove

# Fall Business Meeting Highlights

## **ELECTION RESULTS**

By unanimous vote, President, Dan Campbell and Board Members, Steve Childers, Angela Kramer, and Matt Pyle were elected to 2-year terms ending 12/31/2026. The positions of secretary and vice president remain vacant.

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

Since 2025 marks the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the chapter, the Spring Meeting will be held in Southeastern PA including Castle Valley Mill, Charlestown Woolen Mill, Anselma Mill and an ironworks as originally planned by Dan Campbell but cancelled

due to COVID. The Fall Meeting will be held in the area of Union Mills, where the chapter originated. For this meeting, an Open House event similar to the Mid-Atlantic Grain Fair held at Peirce Mill will be planned as a way to provide exposure to a broader audience.

## **MINUTES:**

Full minutes and finance reports for board and membership meetings are posted on the Chapter Activity page of [www.spoommidatlantic.org](http://www.spoommidatlantic.org) as soon as they are completed.

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*Unsure of your membership status?* Contact [spoommidatlantic@gmail.com](mailto:spoommidatlantic@gmail.com) or 717-741-4366.

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