Grist From The Mill

Newlin Grist Mill, of the Nicholas Newlin Foundation, 219 S. Cheyney Road, Glen Mills PA 19342

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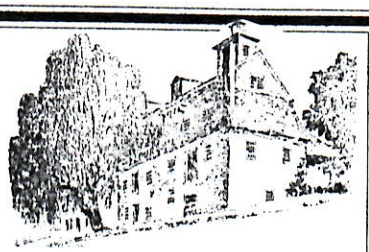

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Remembering the Drought

Drought is a condition not often associated with the Delaware Valley and particularly southeastern Pennsylvania, but in 2002 drought changed the patterns of life and work. Visitors to the mill seem to ask three questions more often than any others: first, how long does a millstone last?; second, how did they (in the 18th century) cope with ice? (alternatively, why is the water wheel inside?); third, what did they do about drought or flood?

The shortfall of rain here began after the floods of hurricane Floyd two years ago, so that by March, local streams and reservoirs were visibly low. Springs just disappeared. By June, the soil was dry to the point that wind and the very occasional shower moved dust after the fashion of a Midwestern prairie. During July, traffic through the park raised billows of dust, lawns and pastures browned, and there were reports of disastrous crop failures in nearby New Jersey and Chester County. Blue sky showed between the shrunken roof shakes of the mill and barn.

In June we ceased to stock our ponds with trout and suspended fishing through much of September. Apparently, the mill had not failed to stock the fishing ponds for more than one two week cycle during the preceding twenty years. Surprisingly, the deciduous trees showed no signs of wilt, but evergreens began to exhibit noticeable signs of stress in mid August. Pines, spruce and hemlock showed brown patches and needle drop. The most visible and alarming symptoms appeared on the giant sequoias that line the border of the large field on Cheyney Road. Great patches of yellow and brown foliage showed as if herbicide had been sprayed in random bursts on each tree. Arborists consulted collected samples of foliage and insisted that there was no fungal, insect or other infestation, and that the damage was simply drought induced. We considered watering, then realized that the sequoias would require an irrigation system appropriate for ten to fifteen acres of crop land.

Rains came and by mid-October the countryside took on the look of a normal lush summer in the Delaware Valley. The reservoirs did not recover, and the constant flow of the West Branch seemed somewhat below the norm. The drought had not ended, but it was interrupted.

As the drought conditions worsened over the spring and summer we waited with some fascination for the seeming inevitable–that for the first time in its near three hundred years, the millrace would fail for other than human causes. At some point, water ceased to flow over the dam; then the small race above the dam, the one that carries water from the West Branch at the northwest corner of the property, failed. At that time, the stream continued to flow in front of the dam from the West Branch, but it bypassed the millrace. All the flow from Concord Creek, from the southeast, went directly to the mill race, then over the outlet sluice gate and into the ponds behind the station, or into the mill. At the time of lowest flow, Concord Creek continued to carry enough water to the mill to run the machinery full time every day, for as many hours as needed.

Had Nathaniel Newlin faced the same drought conditions in the 18th century, the marvelous engineering of the dam and mill race would have supplied continuous power. It might have been a moot point, had the same conditions caused crop failure, however.

PLANNING FOR A FUN SUMMER UNDERWAY

Catching tadpoles and frogs is one of the highlights of the summer programs at the Grist Mill. **Summer Discovery**, the nature based camp program, meets Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday mornings for six weeks in July and August. An extremely popular program for children ages 4—12, it provides the opportunity to interact with the natural world in a positive way.

Heritage Workshops are also part of the summer schedule. These programs feature crafts and skills from colonial times. Classes include instruction in colonial herbs and kitchen gardens, bread making and then baking in a bee hive oven, paper making, blacksmithing and ice cream making.

The summer brochure is available in early April and includes a complete list of programs and workshops and all the information needed for registration.

If you would like to receive a summer brochure call the park office at 610-459-2359.

We're looking forward to a great summer. Hope to see you here!

CATCH AND KEEP TROUT FISHING

Trout fishing was a favorite pastime of E. Mortimer Newlin, our founder. Early on he began stocking the millrace, the ponds, and the stream with trout for recreational fishing. The millrace is no longer stocked, but the ponds are stocked on a regular basis from March through October.

Fishing in the ponds has become a tradition for families. We are now seeing the third generation of fishermen, visiting with their parents and grandparents, experiencing their first time catching a fish. A bamboo pole, a piece of Velveeta on the hook, and a little bit of luck still do the trick.

Catch and Keep Pond Fishing is offered weekends only. You must register in the office first with a valid driver's license. The fees are $3.00 adults, $2.00 seniors, $1.50 children and the fish are $3.00 each. Remember, you must keep what you catch. See you at the ponds!

Your Help is Needed.

The Nicholas Newlin Foundation, owner and operator of the mill and park, is a private, non-profit organization. We rely on support from our friends and neighbors. If your employer has a Matching Gift Program, you can help us to double your donation. Please obtain the appropriate forms and enclose them with your contribution. We'll be happy to do the rest.

Name_____

Address_____

_____

Mail to : Newlin Grist Mill
219 S. Cheyney Road
Glen Mills, PA 19342

Contributor	*$25-$99*	____
Friend	*$100-$249*	____
Sustainer	*$250-$999*	____
Benefactor	*$1000-*	____

Creating a Living Memorial

A new natural area is being prepared at Newlin Grist Mill to honor E. Mortimer Newlin and Elizabeth Battles Newlin. The project is funded with donations from their family and friends. The area is the north facing slope between the Miller's House and the Trimble House. Dabbs Woodfin, Executive Director of Newlin Grist Mill, hopes that the new natural area will visually integrate the Grist Mill, Miller's House and the Trimble House.

Foundation board member Mason Thompson suggested Marty Kromer for the horticultural consultation on the area. Kromer's company, *Garden Signatures*, has been serving clients in the Delaware Valley for the last twenty-five years. He has taught at Longwood Gardens, Morris Arboretum and the Barnes Foundation Arboretum.

Kromer's idea is to enhance the existing slope with plants that would have been available in the eighteenth century. Plants native to eastern Pennsylvania, Delaware or listed in Bartram's Garden Catalog of North American Plants, 1783 are being used in the planting. The plants include Pagoda Dogwood, American Redbud, American Holly, Black Haw, Arrow wood, Bottlebrush Buckeye, Atlantic Rhododendron, Mountain Laurel, Eastern Wahoo, Wild Lupine, Black-eyed Susan, Wild Bergamot, Hay-scented Fern.

Grist Mill staff cleared the area of invasive underbrush and removed storm damaged American Ash trees. The old swimming pool at the Trimble House and propane tank and pipes have also been removed. A loop grass path originating in the lawn in front of the Miller's house leads southwest under the beautiful White Oak to the top of the slope. The path continues east on top of the slope to the Smoke House. The loop is completed with a path down to the outdoor Bake Oven and back to the front of the Miller's House.

Rick Fellows, Restoration Specialist, assisted with the placement of stepping stones that bisect the natural area. The stones are old granite curbing similar to the stepping stones across the Mill race. Fellows located the stones in an old quarry outside New Hope, Pa.

The new plantings were started in 2002 and will continue in 2003. We hope on your next visit to Newlin Grist Mill you will enjoy the improvements in the E. Mortimer Newlin and Elizabeth Battles Newlin natural area.

Contributor

Nancy E. Almond
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Sherley T. Blaxter
Mr. And Mrs. William Brady
James B. Bullitt
Mr. And Mrs. John Butterworth
Doris Newlin Calwell
Samuel and Patricia Cimino
Rich and Cindy Corwin
William and Amy Covert
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Sidney W. Hess
Elizabeth S. Hooper Foundation
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Ronald J. and Rosemarie Siciliano
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Trout Unlimited
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W. Foulke
Pennsylvania State Questors
Frances Sellers

Benefactor

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Mortimer Newlin Sellers
Peter H. and Lucy Bell N. Sellers
Mason and Henry Thompson
The Washington Post

Newlin Grist Mill
219 South Cheyney Road
Glen Mills, PA 19342

610-459-2359
www.newlingristmill.org

Newlin Grist Mill Calendar of Events

Trout Fishing in the Ponds
Weekends only, 9 am - 4 pm.
March thru October.

Trout Day
Sponsored by Delco. Field and Stream and Trout Unlimited.
April 5, 10 am - 3 pm.

Annual Stream Clean-up
Gloves and trash bags are provided. Lunch for volunteers following. Meet at the park office.
May 3, 9 am - 12 noon.

Concord Township Day
Township residents gather for picnics, games, activities and fishing.
May 4, 1 - 4 pm.

Summer Discovery Heritage Workshops
Summer programs for children and adults; June, July, August.
Register beginning in April.

Fall Harvest Festival
Activities, music, food, tours and demonstrations. Great fun for families.
October 4, 10 am - 4 pm.

Christmas Reflections
Historic mill and homes in the park are decorated for the holidays and open for tours. Tickets necessary.
December 13, 2 - 5 pm.