

TrueGrist

NEWS from the FRIENDS of PEIRCE MILL



Milling Days

See Washington's last working gristmill in action! This year, we'll be grinding corn from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm on the following days:

June 22 and 23

July 13 and 14

August 10 and 11

September 14 and 15

October 12 and 13



Coming Soon

June 22

10:00 am to 4:00 pm

Create by the Creek

Enjoy free workshops taught by local artists or borrow some art supplies and paint in the park. Organized with the Washington Studio School.


William Beckett: From Linnaean Hill to the Library of Congress

On Saturday, April 20, visitors came to Rock Creek Park to learn more about the remarkable life of William Beckett, who was once the enslaved manager of Joshua Peirce's nursery business on Linnaean Hill, now park headquarters. The event was the culmination of a year-long research project that began with the discovery of compelling new evidence that Joshua Peirce was not just Beckett's enslaver — he may also have been his father.

With support from HumanitiesDC, the Friends worked with the National Park Service and Howard University PhD candidate Antonio Austin to research Beckett's life before and after emancipation. Together, we created

a temporary exhibit that traced Beckett's long and distinguished career as a DC business owner, church leader, presidential coachman, and doorkeeper at the Library of Congress.

William Beckett: From Linnaean Hill to the Library of Congress was on view near Klinge Mansion from April 20 to May 5, 2024. The exhibit opening featured a conversation about Beckett's life with Project Historian Antonio Austin, Rock Creek Park Acting Superintendent Brian Joyner, and Howard University Professor of History Dr. Elizabeth Clark-Lewis.

More information about William Beckett is available online: <https://tinyurl.com/wmbeckett>. 



Project Historian Antonio Austin shared his research on the life of William Beckett.



The exhibit was installed near Linnaean Hill in Rock Creek Park, where Beckett was born.

The Friends of Peirce Mill, in partnership with the National Park Service and the wider community, works to preserve, restore, and interpret the last working gristmill in Washington, DC for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of all generations.

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Remembering Quentin Looney



Quentin Looney, former Board President of the Friends of Peirce Mill and long-time mill volunteer, passed away on September 28, 2023, after a long struggle with Alzheimer's Disease.

Quentin came to Peirce Mill after a distinguished career as a chemist and expert in renewable energy. He held a PhD in chemistry from the University of Pittsburgh and brought a scientist's curiosity — and a lifelong interest in food and history — to his volunteer work at the mill. Quentin organized the

first cider tasting at Peirce Mill, and started the mill's popular ice cream-making demonstration. A graduate of Penn State's famous Ice Cream Short Course, he enjoyed talking about the chemistry and history of ice cream. Quentin also loved showing park visitors Peirce Mill's wooden machinery. As Board President from 2014–17, Quentin led efforts to restore the mill's barrel hoist, and helped bring chef Alice Waters to Peirce Mill for a visit in 2012.

We'll remember Quentin's gentle kindness and unstoppable curiosity, and will miss spending time with him at Peirce Mill, talking about waterpower and ice cream. 🍷

Meet the New Miller, Aaron Grigsby

With support from the National Park Foundation, the Friends of Peirce Mill recently hired a part-time miller, Aaron Grigsby. He'll be working with the National Park Service and volunteers to operate the mill one weekend a month this summer. *See front page for milling demonstration dates.*

When Aaron isn't running Washington's last working gristmill, he's one of the millers at Deep Roots Milling in Virginia's Blue Ridge Mountains. They grind and sell locally grown grain at historic Woodson's Mill, a wooden gristmill built in the 1790s.

Aaron visited Peirce Mill last fall, when Deep Roots Milling participated in the first Mid-Atlantic Grain Fair. We're looking forward to working with Aaron during the 2024 milling season. He'll be milling with us through October, when Peirce Mill will host its second Grain Fair! 🍷



Summer Square Dance Returns in August



Join the Friends of Peirce Mill and the DC Square Dance Collective on Saturday, August 24, from 7:00 to 10:00 pm as we dance to live music under twinkling lights in the mill yard. Don't know the dos and don'ts of do-si-dos? Don't despair! A caller will teach all the dances and guide you through with ease! All are welcome, no partner, lessons, or prior experience needed. ♡



Family Fun at Peirce Mill

Looking for something fun to do with the kids this summer? We're planning a season full of free activities at Peirce Mill!

On Saturday, July 13, from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm we'll host our first ever **Waterpower Day!** See how Peirce Mill uses the power of water to grind corn into cornmeal. Then experiment with water toys, learn about Archimedean screws, and construct a paper-plate waterwheel.

We're also bringing back a summer favorite: our annual **Ice Cream-Making Demonstration** returns on Saturday, August 10, from 11:00 am to 12:00 pm. Watch how ice cream was made back when Peirce Mill was built, using cream, sugar, vanilla, and plenty of elbow grease.

We'll celebrate the end of summer — and the start of a new school year — with **Children's Day** on Saturday, September 14, from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm. We'll have special tours of the mill for kids and plenty of hands-on crafts and activities. And this year, we'll be joined by Teatro La Bolsa. They'll present "La gallina y la tortilla de maíz," a playful retelling of the classic Little Red Hen story in Spanish and English. ♡

Free public programs at Peirce Mill are supported by the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities



DC COMMISSION ON THE ARTS & HUMANITIES



Save the Dates

Mid-Atlantic Grain Fair

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 12, 10:00 am to 4:00 pm

Celebrate the history of farming and milling whole grains in DC and the region. Featuring locally grown whole-grain foods. Organized with the Common Grain Alliance.

Grain Harvest Dinner

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 6:00 to 9:00 pm

Support DC's gristmill and enjoy a special dinner featuring three grains once ground at Peirce Mill: corn, wheat, and rye. ♡

Help Us Keep the Wheels Turning at Peirce Mill!

The Friends of Peirce Mill and Rock Creek Park are looking for volunteers to give tours of the mill, assist with mill operations, tend our historic orchard, or help with special events. To learn more about volunteering, contact Fritz Edler at **volunteer@friendsofpeircemill.org**.

The Friends of Peirce Mill are also looking for folks

interested in serving on our board. You don't have to be a miller! People with a wide range of skills and backgrounds are encouraged to email Adam Sieminski, **president@friendsofpeircemill.org** to learn more about opportunities to be part of Peirce Mill.

Get monthly news from Peirce Mill: **<https://www.friendsofpeircemill.org/mailling-list>**. 🌱



FRIENDS *of* PEIRCE MILL

Let's keep Peirce Mill running into its third century! Friends of Peirce Mill members support mill maintenance and operations, and free public programs in Rock Creek Park.

- Student \$25 Individual \$40 Family \$100 Apprentice Miller \$250 Miller \$500
 Millwright \$1000 Other donation \$ _____

NAME (please print clearly)

ADDRESS

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Make checks payable to: Friends of Peirce Mill, mail to: 2039 New Hampshire Ave. NW, Apt. 103, Washington, DC 20009. For more information, email: angela@friendsofpeircemill.org, call: 202.248.1505, or visit: friendsofpeircemill.org.

The Friends of Peirce Mill, Inc. is a non-profit organization incorporated in the District of Columbia, recognized by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service as a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization.