

MILLWORK

THE NEWSLETTER OF HANFORD MILLS MUSEUM

Winter 2016

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Join in the Fun at the Region's Coolest Tradition

Make plans to join us Saturday, February 4 for the Ice Harvest Festival. The Mill Pond already has its first cover of ice. Once it is thick enough to support people, we will shovel show off the ice to cultivate the new crop. (Did you know that since snow acts as an insulator, it keeps the pond a little warmer and prevents ice from growing as quickly?)

The Ice Harvest Festival will again feature favorites like sleigh rides (or wagon rides, if we are short on snow), ice sculpting, local vendors and fire warming stations. Inside the Hardware Store, staff and volunteers will offer the annual Hot Soup Buffet with donated soup from area restaurants, with proceeds benefitting the Museum's educational programs. The Hanford House kitchen will be warm with the fire from the Royal Bride wood-fired cook stove as Pamela cooks up delicious historic recipes.

As long as the ice is thick enough, everyone will be welcomed onto the mill pond to help us cut and harvest our ice crop. If you have seen the movie *Frozen*, then you will recognize many of the harvesting tools that we use. Before the day of Ice Harvest, we score the ice by cutting a grid of lines partway through the ice field. On the day of the event, with the guidance of staff and experienced volunteers, visitors will use hand saws to cut along the lines in the ice, move the blocks up the ramp using pike poles, and then grab a pair of ice tongs to lift the blocks onto the sleds. The sleds are then pulled to the ice house, where the ice is stacked and packed with sawdust. At the Independence Day Celebration at Hanford Mills, we will use the ice to surround the steam-powered ice cream churn and make vanilla ice cream for all of our visitors to taste.

We hope that you'll join us for our 29th annual Ice Harvest. Watch for more event details on our website, or call 607-278-5744 for more information. And if you'd like to volunteer at the event or know of a restaurant that would like to donate soup, please contact Brendan Pronteau at brendanp@hanfordmills.org or 607-278-5744.

See you on the ice!



Volunteer Alex Sessions helps to pack the ice house in 2016.

2017 EVENTS

February 4

Ice Harvest Festival

July 4

Independence Day Celebration

September 9

Antique Engine Jamboree and Powerfest

October 14

Woodsmen's Festival

For more information please visit

www.hanfordmills.org

Or call 607.278.5744

Winter Work @ HMM

After the Mill closes each season on October 15, the Museum's staff often get the same question: "So, what are you doing now?" While we may take a few days off, and the focus of our work shifts, our workload certainly doesn't slow down. Dawn and the Mill staff have been working hard to ready the Mill for winter. They drain the forebay tank and take equipment off line, including the waterwheel, all the machines, and our steam plant. On top of all of that, Dawn has finished outdoor projects, such as refurbishing the gristmill dock and putting a new set of stairs on the Monroe House porch.

Brendan has been planning next year's events and working with the education staff as they visit 3-4 schools a week to work with students in CROP after-school programs at ten schools. He's also been working on scheduling field trips, outreach visits, and designing new programs.

Kajsa and Aaron are continuing to work on our comprehensive IMLS-funded collections project. So far they've inventoried over 20,000 items. In addition to better documenting the Museum's objects, through the project we are learning more about our collection every day. The work supported by the IMLS grant is laying the groundwork for the next phase of work in the Museum's collections. In November the Museum submitted an IMLS grant proposal which would allow us to further catalog and organize 9,000 of our collections items.

Beth and Liz have been working on next year's budget along with our membership drive and annual appeal, and they and other staff members

have been meeting with Board committees and the final Board meeting of the year.

All of the senior staff have been planning and preparing for the Ice Harvest Festival in February.

While preparing the ice gets the most visible attention, a lot goes on behind the scenes to make the event a success. All through December and January, the Hanford Mills staff are hard at work publicizing, scheduling volunteers and planning the event program to ensure the success of our largest event. The work includes lining up local farmers, businesses, food trucks, nonprofit organizations, ice fishermen, and ice carvers.

If you want to learn more about what happens behind the scenes at Hanford

Mills, like and follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, and check our website for event and program updates in the New Year. You can also sign up for our email news on the website (www.hanfordmills.org).



School Programs Educator Ginette Day works with students using the Museum's new Enviroscope model as they explore watersheds and pollution. HMM purchased the Enviroscope thanks to funding from the Watershed Agricultural Council.



The Mill on October 15, the last day of the Museum's 2016 season.

Note from the Executive Director

As we change our calendars to a new year Hanford Mills Museum has a lot to celebrate. Our 2016 visitation and outreach was great, and the Walter Smith Hardware Store (the building that houses the Museum's shop, offices, archives and the East Meredith Post Office), and the object collections in the Monroe House, are warmer and more efficient spaces this winter thanks to energy envelope improvements in each building and the installation of a bulk-feed pellet boiler.

In addition to all of the great ice harvest-related activities planned for the Museum's February 4th Ice Harvest Festival, the day will feature behind-the-scenes tours of the pellet-boiler installation (a NYSERDA-funded pilot project), and the culmination of bidding on the painting *Ice Cutting at Hanford Mills NY* donated by artist Werner Rentsch to be sold as a fundraiser for the Museum. Learn more about the painting, and bid early and bid often in the online auction, by visiting www.hanfordmills.org/auctions or by calling the Museum.

As we prepare for our 2017 season we are focusing a variety of preservation and stewardship projects around the historic site and planning new activities for the Learning Lab, with the support a grant from the Museum Association of New York. The Learning Lab's experimental activities will spark imagination and innovation among our youngest visitors and their families.



The bulk-feed silo holds about 6 tons of wood pellets which are automatically fed into the Museum's new wood pellet boiler.



Ice Cutting at Hanford Mills NY was painted and donated by artist Werner Rentsch. The painting is being auctioned to benefit the Museum. The ongoing online auction will culminate with live and on-line bidding at the Ice Harvest Festival on Saturday, February 4th.

And as we move from 2016 to 2017 I would like to thank and bid a very fond farewell to Chris Becker, the Museum's outgoing Board President. Chris has been a passionate advocate for the Museum since she became a Trustee in 2011. I look forward to working with new Board President, Dr. Jack Tessier in 2017. Jack has thoughtfully chaired the Interpretation & Collections Committee, and served on the Executive Committee as the co-secretary, since joining the Board in 2012.

Our visitors, members and friends are the power behind Hanford Mills Museum. Thank you for the role you have played at Hanford Mills in 2016! I look forward to all the great things we will accomplish at Hanford Mills, with your support, in 2017!

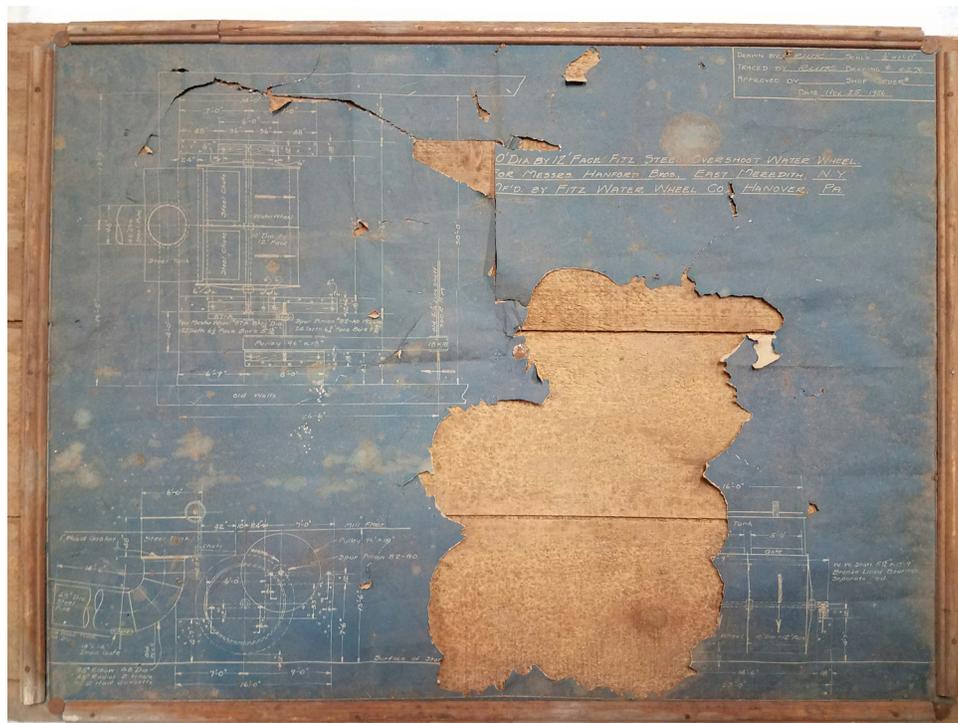
Liz Callahan

The Hanfords' Enterpreneurial Spirit

As you may have seen on our Facebook or Instagram pages, the collections inventory team recently came across the blueprints of the Mill's waterwheel and supporting construction, including the forebay tank that holds the water and the spur gear that transfers power from the waterwheel to the mill machines. Not only is it a great rediscovery in our collection, it is also a great reminder of how exactly the Hanfords operated their business.

We can learn a great deal about David Josiah (D.J.) Hanford and his sons by examining the choices that they made concerning the Mill. The Hanfords, by all definitions of the word, were entrepreneurs. They understood that experimentation, expansion, and a firm grasp on changing technologies and communal needs were critical to their survival as a business. When D.J. purchased the Mill in 1860 it was one room sawmill for the local community powered by an undershot flutter wheel (a flutter wheel operates when the water flows under the wheel like the paddlewheel on a boat). By 1880 he had expanded the business to include feed production, specialty woodwork, and barrelheads, while still sawing more than 200,000 board feet each year and employing at least three people. The power system had also changed as the Hanfords began using three water turbines to power their machines. This speaks not only to D.J.'s business acumen, but also to his understanding of technology and his ability to see what machines and power sources would make his mill as competitive as possible.

Through the 1890s and the early twentieth century, D.J. and, more increasingly, his sons William and Horace, expanded the Mill further and experimented with the production of shingles, boxes, and broom and tool handles. They tried, and sometimes failed, to do many things in their mill. The Hanfords were willing to take chances, but that does not translate to them being incautious, as evidenced by records like the blueprints.



In examining the blueprints, it's clear that the Hanfords put careful planning, time, and effort into the design and installation of the waterpower system that Horace and William Hanford used in the Mill during the 1920s and 1930s. Mill owners at the time were also researching and debating choices in

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power generation at the time. Their decision to install and use the “10’ dia. by 12’ face Fitz Steel Overshoot Water Wheel” demonstrates that the Hanfords believed the waterwheel gave them the best opportunity to continue with the success of their business, and it did. The Hanfords stayed in business for another 20 years after the installation of the wheel. Additionally, while steam power was in heavy use by the Hanfords during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the Hanfords clear and conscious choice to return to water power as a supplement to the steam power speaks to their vision to most sustainably use the resources that they had available in a way that would translate to a profit for their business, a vision that played out truthfully.

Simply put, the Hanfords were able to successfully stay in business for over 80 years due to their willingness to experiment with different products and power sources, combined with their ability to acknowledge the importance of change and of their own limitations. Here at the Museum, we are constantly experimenting and trying to give our guests the best possible experience in a way that carries on the entrepreneurial spirit of the Hanfords. We succeed and fail, just as they did, but we are always open to new ideas, projects, and programs that fit within our own vision of the site. When the snow melts and the waterwheel is running again, come to Hanford Mills Museum to see if we’ve properly hit the mark.



Collections Inventory Initiative

The collections inventory team has completed the inventory of the Mill building and his nearly finished in the Hardware Store. Over 20,000 objects have been inventoried as of the writing of this article. One of the benefits of completing this inventory is that in going through all of the objects, the staff can identify more objects that we can use to strengthen our interpretation and programming at the Museum. Some of the interesting objects that have been recently rediscovered include a device that uses black powder to split logs, a blueprint for the Mill’s 1926 Fitz overshot waterwheel, and a small telephone switchboard that is identified by a label as East Meredith’s first switchboard. Now that we have better documentation of objects like these, the staff can begin to think about how we can use objects like these to enhance our guided tours, educational programming, and special events.



Telephone Switchboard

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HANFORD MILLS MUSEUM

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IM EXPLORE THE **POWER**
Of The **PAST**



SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 4
10 AM - 4 PM

JOIN US FOR
WINTER'S COOLEST
TRADITION!

The Mission of Hanford Mills Museum is to inspire audiences of all ages to explore connections among energy, technology, natural resources and entrepreneurship in rural communities with a focus on sustainable choices.



**Council on
the Arts**

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