



Pine Mill News

Friends of the Pine Creek Grist Mill Summer 2015 Issue

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By Tom Hanifan

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We welcome a new ranger to the park. Gwen Prentice has been on the job a few days. She has been the park ranger at Lake Macbride for several years. Acting park manager Jordan Vastine recently left the DNR. We miss Jordan's energy, "can do" positive attitude and willingness to help. He has moved to Des Moines to pursue a business opportunity. Jordan became acting park manager when Jim Ohl retired in December.

A big thank you goes out to the Moline Kohl's Department store. They came in April to help us clean the mill and prepare it for school field trips and for our summer visitors. They also left an important donation.

The interpretation program is in dire need of donations. Keeping the mill open to the public is a challenge this year. This is a shame in a year when attendance in May and June were perhaps the highest ever. Some reliable funding sources have not donated. Some sources have donated less than before. Also, canceling Heritage Day created a large funding short-fall.

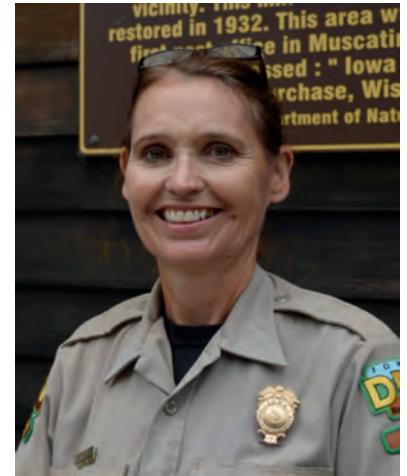
The annual Ghosts of Pine Creek has been canceled this year. We decided that more people would be served if the mill were open to visitors during the summer and fall. This fun event will be missed.

To save money we would like to begin a different approach to distributing our newsletter. Publishing the print version costs about \$1800 per year. We are thinking about sending the digital version to members who have provided their email address to us, rather than printing and mailing the print version. If you do NOT want to receive it by email please contact me at tomhanifan@yahoo.com. If you have not sent us your email and would like to receive the digital version please send me your email address.

You can help us teach school classes how to use old time tools. Don't worry, we are not asking you to actually teach them. We need logs for them to split into wood shingles.

They love to take their shingles home to show off. Cedar works best because it splits easily. Other kinds may split well too if they have no knots. Logs cut to about 12-15 inch diameter and about 15-20 inches long will work. Do you have logs or know of someone who would be willing to donate logs? Contact Tom at 563-263-4818. Of course if you enjoy children you can help us teach them. It's fun to work with children.

Two new projects to promote the Mill and Park have begun. First, Friends of the Mill has applied to be listed on a new tourism resource being developed by the National Geographic Society and the National Park Service called Mississippi River Geotourism MapGuide. The Geotourism program "seeks to promote the area's natural, historic and cultural sites to potential visitors who are seeking authentic travel experiences". It is unique because they rely on local citizens to recommend places of interest, businesses, or recreation areas along the Mississippi River. National Geographic feels that the best travel advice comes from people who live in the area. The application also includes references to Melpine School, the Nye Cemetery, the 1870's bridge near the mill, and the Old Stone Church. The site will be launched in June of 2016.



Ms. Gwen Prentice

Restoration Report

By David Metz



One of the many small jobs at the mill. Dick Klauer is repairing the floor behind the double roller mill.



Jerry Kieth and Dick Klauer are building one of the two roller mill safety covers.



A trial fitting of one of the new roller mill safety covers.



Clarence Klauer is reinstalling one of the broken segments of the corn roller mill drive pulley.

I am very happy to report that the restoration crew made some serious progress this season. We also have a few challenges that I will discuss later. This year we are concentrating on fixing old nagging problems and putting one more machine into operation.

Every year, when the ice breaks up in the creek or trees come down the creek during the periodic flash floods' the penstock gate structure has been badly damaged. Last year we cut off most of the structure and just left the operating rod in place. This spring we installed a new rod to replace the badly bent up original one. Now we can open the penstock up on work days to help keep mud from building up in the turbine pit.

For several years we have back driven the steam engine with the mill's main 20 HP electric motor. While this arrangement worked, sometimes when the mill was cold the high starting torque required to put all of the machines in motion caused the motor's circuit breaker to trip. Not wanting to damage any part of the system, and striving to make the mill's operation more dependable I decided to install a second motor that would just power the steam engine.

This motor would automatically start 30 second after the mill's main motor to reduce the load on the mill's electrical system. Because the new motor is controlled electronically by a device called a frequency drive when the steam engine motor starts, it slowly comes up to full speed again to reduce strain on the machinery. I am delighted to say that the new arrangement works perfectly. The best part is that not only do the circuit breakers not trip; the mill's operators did not have to change any of their procedures.

Another long term goal has been to put one of the mill's three double roller mills back into motion. Notice that I said motion not operation. The mill's wheat milling plant is very complex and the chance that it will ever be put back into operation like the mill's other two plants is very slim. I decided

that it would be nice now that we had the motor capacity again to power one of the roller mills to at least have one in motions again. We picked the mill closest to the millstones and gave it a close inspection. It appeared completely intact with no serious problems.

Since these machines have not moved since the boiler failed in 1918 our first job was to clean the dried lubricant from all of the bearings. Slowly the crew got the old dried lubricant removed and all of the shafts in the machine freed up and turning smoothly. Once we had all the parts moving we installed a pulley on the basement main line shaft, belted the mill up and tested it. It ran right off the bat, with no hot bearings or other problems.

Next we disconnected the mill from the line shaft until we were able to build safety covers for the mill to protect the public and the mill staff. Once the covers were finished we gave the mill a final lubrication and reconnected it to the line shaft. Now that it is operating, new interpretive signage will be installed to explain the mill to our visitors.

Our interpretive log exhibit has been completed and installed on the second floor. This last winter Mr. Jim Hitchcock volunteered to go out in the woods, cut down a tree and by hand trim a log to show all of the steps a pioneer had to do to convert the rough log into a square wood beam like those used to build Pine Mills. Originally we had planned to set the exhibit on the first floor work bench. The log Jim made for us was too large to install there so we built a stand for it from oak beams and installed the log on the second floor where we had enough room for it.

Once we had the log on the second floor (not all that easy of a job) we attached the various tools like a broad axe and adze to it in the positions that they were used to shape the log. We also installed a timber framers drill and an interpretive sign to

Restoration Report Continued

explain the exhibit to the public. One look at the log and you can see the amount of hard work the pioneer builders of Pine Mills had to do to shape its huge posts and beams.

Down in the mill's basement the old problem of machinery damaged by high humidity has reared its head again. In this case the humidity caused the 48" wood pulley that powers the corn roller mill on the first floor to partly delaminate. What happened is this: Our wood pulleys are made up from small individual segments of curved wood laminated together with glue to make up the body of the pulley. The high humidity had softened the glue on one edge of the pulley allowing some of the segments to literally fly off.

This really bothered me as this pulley was a gift from the staff of Independence Mill in Independence, Iowa. Our original pulley had simply rotted to the point where it had begun to fall a part, its wood had become so rotten that it could not be restored. Without the gift of the pulley from

Independence we would not have been able to restore the corn milling plant.

It took the restoration crew nearly five hours of work to repair the damaged pulley. This time the wood segments were glued in place with water-proof glue and reinforced with long wood screws. Before you read this, the plan is to install traverse all-thread bolts through the body of the pulley to prevent any future possibility of delamination. The pulley also needs to be cleaned and varnished to prevent future moisture damage.

We have been working on a variety of other issues at the mill this summer. It seems like there is always a lighting fixture that needs repair, a stuck window or some other minor repair to be done. One project that still needs to be done is to begin experiments with specially made conical idler pulley to determine if we can prevent the millstone drive belt from coming off if its pulleys when over loaded. If this idea works we will have all of our major problems solved.

TIMS to Publish Pine Mills Book this fall

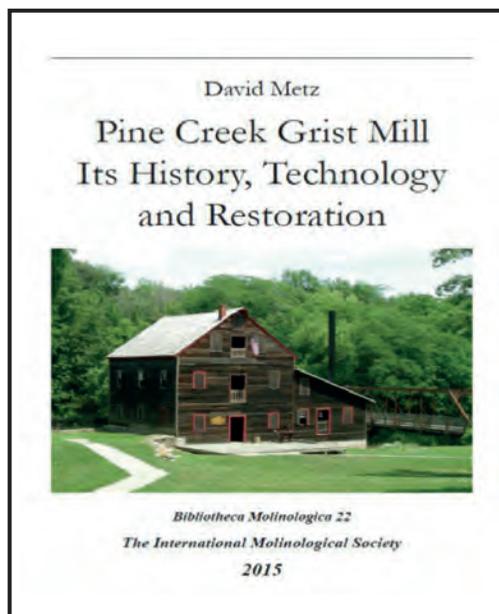
By David Metz

Periodically The International Molinological Society (TIMS) publishes an academic book on old mills for their members in a series they call the ***Bibliotheca Molinologica***. This fall they are publishing the twenty second book in the series (BM-22) titled *Pine Creek Grist Mill, its History, Technology and Restoration*. My hope is that this book will give Pine Mills the international recognition it deserves and encourage others to restore their local historic old mills.

Yes, as author of the book I am tooting my own horn here. When I joined the Friends and began to do restoration work at Pine Mills I realized that our organization's work needed to be documented. My notes, drawings and photos slowly grew over a period of 14 years into a over 500 page book. The resulting book is a sort of hybrid. It covers the mill's history and how it operates along with what a great deal of technical information about what we learned along the way in the art of restoring old mills back into operation.

TIMS editor Mr. Tony Bonson had the hard job of distilling this mass of information down to what he felt TIMS readers would find most interesting. Since every member of TIMS will get a copy mailed to them worldwide, the cost of the postage is critical. Due to the regulations of the British Post Office the book is only affordable for TIMS to publish if it

weighs one pound or less! This meant that Mr. Bonson had to edit the book down to just 200 pages from what I had written. After reading the drafts he sent me I have to say that he chose well in my opinion.



Since BM-22 Pine Mills is TIMS 50th anniversary publication, It is the first publication they have done in full color and it is soft bound in 8.5" X 11" format.

If you are interested in a copy the book will be available on the TIMS web page sometime in September. TIMS members will receive a copy as part of their membership. Non-members can order a copy directly from the TIMS web page. The final price of the book is estimated at this time to be \$45.00. The TIMS print run will be limited so if you wish to have a copy please let me know. If there is sufficient interest I may have copies printed here in the USA on an on-demand basis.

If you are interested in old mills I encourage you to join TIMS. Membership is \$43 a year. It includes their excellent semi-annual publications International Molinology and their email publication TIMS E-News. When new books in the Bibliotheca Molinologica series are published members also receive them at no cost. More information on TIMS can be found at their website <http://www.molinology.org/>

Interpretation Report

By Tom Hanifan

Important things have been happening in the interpretation arena. The interpretation crew deserves a big pat on the back for a successful school field trip program this spring. 802 students and adults participated in a variety of learning activities. Our interpretation staff spent 275 hours educating students. In addition, about 199 hours were provided by volunteers.

In addition to several Muscatine schools we hosted classes from Highland schools, Buffalo, Bluegrass, Iowa City, Louisa-Muscatine, and Rockridge. In July we hosted "at risk" children from the Quad Cities who are from families with difficulties. During the day, students moved between stations that might include butter making, a mill tour, grinding corn and

sampling corn pancakes, having a lesson in the one room school, using old time tools, playing old time games, or taking a nature hike

Mill attendance so far has been outstanding. More general visitors came in May than any previous May by a wide margin. We had 1,462 visitors. Attendance in June was the 2nd highest June ever – 1535 visitors

In the last newsletter you learned about an interpretive log display that shows the process of turning a log into a beam like those used to build the mill. Leadership Muscatine graduate Rich Hitchcock used old time tools to create the display. The restoration crew has attached old time tools and interpretive signs to complete this informative exhibit. When you visit the mill you will find this new exhibit on the second floor.



Heritage Day Cancelled

By Tom Hanifan

Heritage Day 2015 has been cancelled. It was a difficult decision. However, history fans will still be able to get their fix at the Park. The Buckskinners Rendezvous will go on as usual from Sept. 18th – 20th in the upper part of the Park.

We hope to bring Heritage Day back, perhaps in a different form or at a different time of year. It was a popular fall event in the Muscatine and Quad City area. But it was the victim of a perfect storm of situations.

First, fall events in our area have crowded the calendar and made it more difficult to attract festival goers. When I called demonstrators and performers to inform them, most mentioned the increased number of fall events in the area. A recent article in the Quad City Times mentioned that there were 300 fall events in the Quad Cities area. In today's Quad City Times it was announced that another major fall event had been cancelled due to declining attendance. That

event had a 30 year history of success.

Second, it was not clear if Park staff would be available to help us put on the event. The recent departure of the acting park manager made the decision look even wiser. Although we now have a new park manager being new to the park she would not have had time to prepare for an event this big and complex.

Third, the public may have grown tired of what we offered. Attendance last year was 40% less than 4 years ago. The public definitely missed the canoe rides and Rubber Duck Race. For 2 years we could not do them because the dam was under repair. The public missed the home-made ice cream that we haven't offered the past 2 years. Fewer demonstrators have come in the last 4 years. This could reflect the declining attendance. Or it may have been part of the cause for declining attendance.

Pine Mill Projects

A lot is going on at Pine Mills this summer. Work on the log cabin had been suspended due to the cabin's construction supervisor Gary Christensen's injury this spring. He is on the mend and reports that work to complete the cabin's chimney and roof will begin soon. The restoration crew has started work on the cabin window frames, shutters and doors. Long time member of the Friends Dick Clevenger has volunteered to build the sashes for the windows. Except for the sashes the remaining wood work at the cabin will all be cedar to give the cabin that old time rustic look.

The photo below shows the damage to the upstream wing wall on the east side of the bridge that occurred during the last flash flood on the creek. Our new park manager Gwen Prentice informed the DNR district engineer of the problem and he has hired a contractor to repair the damage.

Another important job that the DNR is helping us with is the accumulation of mud in the mill's flywheel pit. The reoccurring flash floods on the creek each leave at least a half inch or more of fresh mud behind in the basement. Five years ago you could look down into the pit under the steam engine's flywheel and see bedrock. Today depending on where you look there is between 6" and 20" of mud accumulated that needs to be removed.

Mike Defoe the DNR district engineer has asked for quote from the same contractor that is building the new ADA sidewalk to the mill to bid on the mud removal project. In the



deepest areas the mud will have to be shoveled up and bucketed out of the mill. Once the bulk of the mud is gone the remainder can be washed out using a hose.

The same contractor has also bid on repairing the siding on the creek side of the mill that was damaged in the last flash flood. We have on hand at the mill the replacement siding that is already stained mill brown along with the special stain if more siding is needed.

The ADA sidewalk project that connects the mill with the new restrooms has been held up for weeks due to the constant rain we have had this summer. Part of the concrete walkway has been poured and it is hoped that if the rain holds off the rest will be soon. The photo above shows how the new walkway extends the ADA mandated five degree slope all the way to the mill deck.

Speaking of our badly deteriorated deck Gwen and Mike also have plans in the works to replace it with a new one yet this year. The problem is that the deck boards have dried out leaving large openings between some of them that are a safety hazard. The restoration crew has been replacing the worst of the decking on a piecemeal basis. It has gotten to the point where making temporary repairs is no longer viable. The plan is for the new deck to be pressure treated wood to give it a longer life span. As a temporary measure sheets of plywood have been installed on the deck to cover the old boards and give the public a safe surface to walk on.



President's Column Continued

If you are interested you can visit their temporary site at <http://mississippiriver.natgeotourism.com/>. [A physical map will be developed later.](#)

Second, Friends has started working with other agriculture related organizations in Muscatine County to develop an agriculture related tourism effort. This is in the early stage of development and we are working on a grant proposal to implement the effort. The project is tentatively called "Muscatine Area Agricultural Tourism".

Pine Creek Bridge An Important Piece of Engineering and Local History

In the fall of 1877 Hermann Huchendorf and his partner Mr. Biesley had just completed at great expense converting Pine Mills to the New Process of wheat milling. They had added the lean-to to the mill building and in its basement installed a used steam engine and boiler needed to provide the extra power that the new milling machinery required.

Huchendorf had only one problem he could not solve by himself, the old wooden bridge that crossed Pine Creek had rotted out cutting him off from his customers to the east. He appealed to the county supervisors for a new bridge in 1877 only to be turned down due to the cost. An article in the Muscatine Journal of February 6th 1878 presented the case for a new bridge:



MONTPELIER CORRESPONDENCE A Bridge Wanted at Pine Mills

Editor Journal. – There is one subject of great importance to the public to which we would respectfully invite the attention of our county supervisors and all the many who would be benefited thereby. I refer to a bridge across Pine Creek at the crossing by the mill. That it is an absolute necessity we think needs no argument more than a familiarity with the place, business, site and surroundings. The mill company has spared no money nor pains to make it first class in its machinery, grinding and water power capacity, and they are rewarded for their enterprise with a rushing business. They often take in 300 bushels of grains in grists alone in a single day. People come here as far as 15 to 20 miles around which in fact itself speaks for the satisfactory work done here.

Now as this place is frequently impassable due to high water or ice Scott County and Davenport get the trade east of the creek and thus hundreds of dollars are carried away out of the county annually, which would otherwise naturally go to Muscatine and be retained close to home. There are many citizens on the east side who trade in Davenport for this cause alone, who would spend their money within their own county if the crossing here was good and permanent. Otherwise they must go in by ways several miles further to reach a bridge for Muscatine or for the Mills as the roads are not always on a section line in this vicinity.

In viewing this matter in all its features and considering the interests of the public, we think it one of the most necessary improvements wanted in the county at the present time.

Two numerous signed petitions have been presented already, and a much larger one can be procured without any trouble. The site has been viewed by the commissioners and approved but on account of the great flood last summer, this bridge was deferred for the present year.

County governments of the era could not afford expensive design and engineering studies. They needed simple practical solutions to bridging the many streams and rivers of Iowa. The primitive wood bridges of the settlement period would not do anymore. Permanent durable bridges that needed little maintenance were what the state needed.

Metal bridges were the answer. There are many ways a iron bridge could be built, the most popular became the Pratt truss. There were many regional and national firms that built bridges for the county market. The bridges were all standard designs based on modular construction. A county board could leaf through the catalog, pick out a bridge that appeared suitable and then request quotations from the various suppliers.

A local contractor would be hired to build the stone bridge piers and the approaches to the bridge site. Once the contract for the bridge was let, the bridge company inspected the site and if all were ready the new bridge would be delivered by rail to the closest point to the bridge site. Once delivered the bridge company sent out a crew of their own men to assemble the bridge. Since the bridge was a standard design that the crew had built many times before the county knew that the construction would go on quickly and they would have a sturdy bridge when it was completed.

The Muscatine County supervisors choose the Wrought Iron Bridge Company of Canton, Ohio to build the new bridge.



Named after the material they used to build their bridges the Wrought Iron Bridge Company had been founded in 1871 by Mr. John Hammond, an experienced builder of bridges who held several patents on bridge designs. His new company was a great success, in its first year it sold \$200,000 worth of his iron bridges. The factory employed over 300 men working around the clock to produce the iron components used to construct their bridges.

Hammond at first favored his own patented bow string arch bridge. This was a costly design to build and it began to lose favor to the newer more economical Pratt Truss design. This change and Hammond's astute marketing to Iowa County Boards made Iowa a very good customer for his bridges in the 1880's.

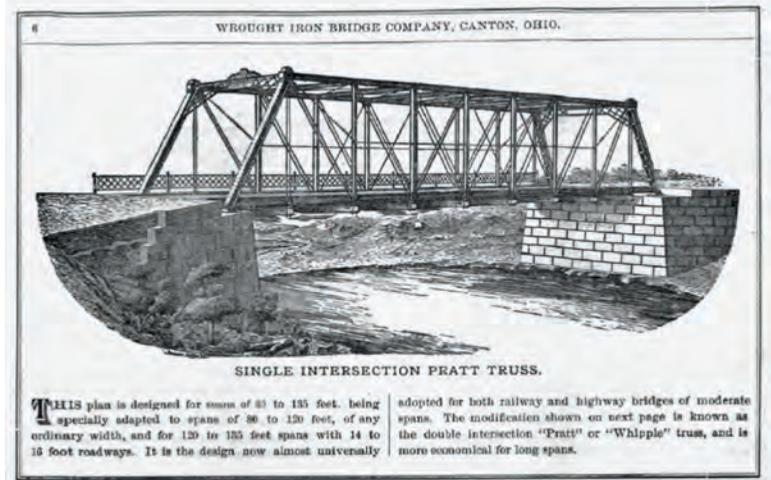
The material Hammond chose to build his bridges from is a rarity today. To understand why it is historically important we need to look back at how iron was refined in the mid 1800's. Iron ore is converted into metal in a blast furnace. Iron right from the furnace contains a great deal of the element carbon. It is called cast iron at this point. Molten cast iron is very fluid and it can be cast in molds into very complex shapes. Everything from skillets to ornate stair ways were made from cast iron in the 1800's.

Take out some of the carbon and you have steel. Unlike cast iron steel is not brittle, it is much stronger. It is also harder to make correctly and in the mid 1800's expensive and very difficult to use for casting.

If the foundry removed all of the carbon from the iron they ended up with wrought iron. Wrought iron is impossible to cast, when molten it is a pasty mass that has to be hammered (wrought) or rolled into structural shapes. It also had the very useful property of being rust resistant. This is why Pine Creek bridge is still structurally sound after many years with no paint to protect it.

By 1885 the Wrought Iron Bridge Company had sold 21,600 feet of bridges in the state of Iowa. By the end of the century the Pratt Truss bridge had become the predominant bridge design in the state. Of the hundreds built in the late 1800's, Pine Creek bridge is an excellent example. Other than some minor damage from being hit by trees during Pine Creek's flash floods, the bridge is still in good shape and with care it will last for many more years.

From the Missel family archives,
Pine Creek Bridge survives a truck
wreck in the 1940's



A page from the Wrought Iron Bridge Company catalog showing their standard Pratt Truss bridge module.

What can the Friends do for Pine Creek Bridge? While the old bridge is not part of our mandate since it is not part of the mill, as you have read here it is an important historical artifact. Fortunately the DNR is taking the care of the bridge seriously as is show by their recent repair of the bridge's stone abutments.

There are three things we can do if we wish. One is to find the funds to replace the two missing builders plaques that were above the portal on each end of the bridge. For less than \$50 and a little help from the park staff we can place interpretive signs on the bridge to inform the public of its importance. We can also encourage the DNR to repair the broken support rod on the east side of the bridge. By working together we can preserve the bridge and make visiting it a more informative experience for the park's visitors.



The Missel Family at Pine Mills

By David Metz

In Part Three we complete the story of the Missel Family, their final years at Pine Mills and a new beginning.

We pick up the story with Michael Missel Junior describing his teenage years at Pine Mills

My parents had nine children. There were four sons. Two of my older brothers had gone to work elsewhere. The third brother became my father's helper, for two men were needed for much of the labor at the mill. In the evenings after school, and on Saturday, I would be drafted. Every Saturday the mill was swept from top to bottom. On occasion in the evenings, I would assist in the sharpening of the stones for the burr mill. The tool for this was a iron chisel fitted into a handle, and picking of the furrows was tiring, tedious job lasting into the late hours. The stones HAD to be ready for morning use and the work could only be done when the mill was not operating. The brother who had been my father's helper entered the army during WWI and I became my father's "right hand man." I was young and very inexperienced and my father's health was beginning to fail, but we managed. Boys can become men in a hurry when necessary.

The mill operated by waterpower, when feasible, but when, with the dry season the creek was low, we would use steam for power. The engine was usually fired with wood, and if it were an extremely dry season, much wood was needed. It was not unusual to see different piles banked two cords high and ten cords long — at the start of dry weather. As cord wood became scarce, some coal was purchased at the mines North of Buffalo. The quality of this coal was never the best. Still vivid in my memory is the quality of that coal. It would melt and run over the grates in the firebox smothering the fire.

The last time we used that steam engine was in 1918. A flue blew out. Luckily I was not in front of the hot water. I can thank my lucky stars for that, because I was "firing" at the time. It was cold weather. Steam was everywhere. My father was running the wheat rollers, grinding flour. The steam



A photo of Mike Missel Junior taken sometime after 1918 when the mill's boiler failed.

caused him to come running down to see the cause. When he saw me putting the fire out, he told me that was the right thing to do, but to let the engine run another fifteen minutes so that he could empty the rollers.

Flour ground for sale during those "war years" was inferior to my father's standards, and so, with the steam engine needing repairs, his health failing (he died in the spring of 1921), we curtailed activities. We continued to "custom grind" until the State of Iowa purchased the mill in 1927.

By the end of its life, Pine Mill showed some serious wear and tear. The machinery that Huchendorf had installed in 1890 had been running for over thirty years, a long life for any machine. Repairs were often makeshift or not done at all. When restoration started at Pine Mills we found several of the Babbitt bearing to have been completely worn out (to the point where one had melted!). The steam engine's brass crosshead bearings had been repeatedly shimmed with everything from scraps of leather belting to old tin cans that had been crushed flat. In other words, it appeared that expensive professional repairs were avoided and whatever that could be done

Iowa's small local flour mills were no longer economically viable. All of the other flour mills in Muscatine County had long since ceased to operate, so it is a testament to the dedication of the Missel family that they carried on as long as they did. The simple fact is that it costs money to maintain a mill and the profits simply were not there to support the old mill anymore. Michael senior's health problems were finally diagnosed as stomach cancer. Even with his condition deteriorating he kept on running his mill as long as he could. He died at his home near the mill in April of 1921 at age 64. This left his sons Michael, Jr. and Carl to carry on with the mill.

Pine Mill Ceases Operation

By the early 1920's Pine Mill operated only intermittently. Since the failure of the boiler in 1918 the mill operated only on waterpower. Mostly it ground feed for the local farmers using the triple roller mill that Huchendorf had installed in 1890. The mill's ledger books show the slow change after 1918 as the Missel family depended more on farming and less on the mill for their livelihood. While some grinding may have been done after March of 1920, there are no entries in the ledgers for it. Instead we begin to find entries for farming. In 1925 there are entries for "tankage" used for feeding hogs. Egg sales are entered for 1925. Eggs sold for \$0.22 to \$0.40 a dozen with the chickens producing from nine to thirty dozen a week.

The final end of Pine Mill as a commercial business came with the creation of Wild Cat Den State Park. The two spinster Brant sisters owned much of the land to the west and north side of the Missels property and the mill. They felt that the property had great natural beauty. As early as 1918 they had begun discussions with the state regarding the creation of a new state park encompassing their land. The Brandt sisters deeded the first parcel of land to the state in 1926 and work on the park began. The state of Iowa then purchased additional property from surrounding farmers to round out the park. By 1927 the state developers saw that to lay out the roads as they wanted and to complete the park as planned, they would need to add the Missel property to the park.

The land in question consisted of 67 acres that included Pine Mills, the dam, the old miller's house (the Missel home), barn and other farm buildings. The Missel family farmed part of the land and they still operated the mill on occasion. The family offered to sell the property to the state for \$12,000. The state considered this amount to be excessive and offered \$7,750.

A badly dilapidated Pine Mills in the early 1930's

No agreement could be reached between the two parties. Thus the state of Iowa began condemnation proceedings that would allow the state to legally take title to the land.

At the condemnation hearing at the county sheriff's office six local residents heard testimony on the value of the land. One witness, contractor Tom Maher said the buildings on the land were worth \$10,750. Mrs. Hazel Phillips, the county treasurer testified that the counties valuation on the entire property was only \$2,900. Various members of the Missel family testified on their current use of the land and building. In the end the Missel family lost the case and the state took over the land and the mill for the amount first offered.

The Wheatland Feed Mill

This did not end the Missel family's involvement in milling. While flour milling had long since become a large industrial enterprise, feed milling for livestock continued to be a mostly local business. Farmers still needed a local mill where they could have their corn shelled and ground into feed for their livestock. After deciding to stay in the milling business, Michael Missel Jr. and his brother Carl moved to the town of Wheatland in Clinton County, Iowa, and bought a feed mill and elevator in that town.

At the Wheatland mill Carl and Michael Junior manufactured and sold a full line of feed for hogs, cattle, chickens and horses. They also sold animal health care products and heating coal. To prove to their customers the superior nature of their hog feed they had their own testing program at the feed mill. The demonstration hogs were raised under their personal supervision. Visiting farmers could see that the brothers recommended feeding program could take a hog from 50 pounds weight to 170 pounds in six weeks. Michael paid a great deal of attention to these feed efficiency



The Missel Family Continued

tests. He enjoyed the development of new feeds and feed programs more than any other aspect of his work.

Both Carl and Michael were active in the community. They both had their homes and families in Wheatland and belonged to the volunteer fire department. WWI veteran Carl belonged to the local American Legion post. They operated the Wheatland feed mill for seventeen years till 1945 when they sold the business. They must have wearied of the business for Mike told the local newspaper that he had not had a vacation in 17 years. After selling the mill the two brothers remained good friends. Under new owners the feed mill continued in business until a fire destroyed it in 1951

After selling the feed mill Michael continued to live in Wheatland at 210 Jefferson Street. Michael quickly changed gears and went from the feed business to being a general contractor. He built most of the new homes in Wheatland during the 1950's & 60's period. Michael's daughters remember that he enjoyed building homes more than he did running the feed mill. He did however keep his hand in his old business by often consulting area farmers who were having problems with their livestock feed programs.

After selling the Wheatland feed mill Michael's brother Carl moved to Davenport, Iowa, where he worked as a maintenance man at M.L. Parker's department store in the downtown. His wife worked as a schoolteacher. Carl died in 1956.

Michael kept active in his old age, even replacing the siding on a neighbor's house at age 80. A severe heart attack eventually slowed him down. He was able to visit Pine Mills again before his death where he gave the park manager Ken Hyman the oral history quoted here. He died on January 14, 1988 at age 88 and he is buried in St. Mary's Cemetery in Muscatine. With his death history lost the last living link to the days when Pine Mills fed the residents of Muscatine County.



The Missel Families new feed mill in Wheatland, Iowa.

2015 Trail Run

By Tom Hanifan

Our annual Wildcat Den Trail Run/Walk will be Saturday Sept. 12th at 8 AM. The course is a 5K (3 mile) route beginning and ending in the upper picnic area. Most of the course is off-road following marked trails through the park's scenic natural areas. This is a unique event that brings a mix of serious runners seeking a challenge as well as casual walkers wanting to see the park in a new different way.

Registration forms are available at the mill, at the Muscatine Y, and at the Running Wild store in Davenport. You may also register online thru the Cornbelt Running Club Web site or the Muscatine Running Club Web site. You may also register online at <https://secure.getmeregistered.com/WildcatRun>. Trophies and medals will be awarded.

All proceeds go to Pine Creek Grist Mill. Entry Fee: \$20 through September 9. Late entries \$22. Make checks payable to Friends of Pine Creek Mill. Additional donations to support the mill are appreciated.

Questions? Call Tom at 563-263-4818 or at tomhanifan@yahoo.com.



Photo Credit: Nancy Keel

Register with this QR code on your smart phone



The generosity of donors makes it possible for us to host visitors and provide our school program. Since the last newsletter many people and organizations have contributed to our efforts in 2015. We would like to see you name added to the list. In addition to those listed below, many people have donated smaller amounts. We would like to see your name added to this list.

Wheat Level \$1,000 +
Moline Kohl's store

Corn Level \$500 to \$999
Community Foundation of Muscatine
Clifford Scherrer
New Hope Foundation
Kent Corp.
HNI Charitable Foundation
MUSCO Sports Lighting

Buckwheat Level \$300 to \$499
Loryann Eis
Agnes Digney
MUSCO Sports Lighting
SSAB
Howe Trust
Charles Missel
Anonymous

Rye Level \$100 to \$299
Mark and Chris Post
Elizabeth Brown
Bennett & Judy Reischauer
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Pat Chalupa

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Diana Gradert
Gladys Mittman
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Gerald and Ginger Arp
John & Lori Mittman
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First National Bank of Muscatine

Oat Level \$50 to \$99
Gary & Sheryl Carlson
Steve & Linda Garrington
Arnold & Judy Sohn
Barry Johnson Financial Services
Butterworth Clocks
Community Bank & Trust
Steve Schoenig,
Richard Maeglin
Don Paul

The Friends of the Pine Creek Grist Mill officers are:

David Metz edits your newsletter, contact him if you have any questions about or material for the newsletter.

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563-263-2451

Pine Creek Grist Mill is on the web and FaceBook! Get downloads of our publications and see photos of the latest happenings. See us at:

www.pinecreekgristmill.com

Donation Form

The Friends Need Your Help

The Friends of the Pine Creek Grist Mill is a volunteer organization. To do the many programs we have like this newsletter, school programs, fund raising, restoration and more we need more help. If the Friends are to continue we need more active members. Regardless of your prior experience there is something for you to. How much time and energy you devote is up to you. This is your chance to help your organization. Our projects are fun and the fellowship with other members is great. Contact Tom Hanifan or Dave Metz (contact information is above) if you are interested.

Name _____

Organization _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

Zip _____ Dates you wish to sponsor _____

Person you wish to honor _____

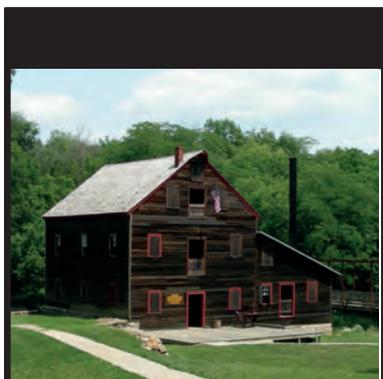
Amount Donated \$ _____

Make your check payable to:
Friends of the Pine Creek Grist Mill

Mail it to:
Friends of the Pine Creek Grist Mill
C/O Mr. Tom Hanifan
Box 1205
Muscatine, Iowa 52761

Friends of the Mill
C/O Mr. David Metz
725 Climer Street
Muscatine, Iowa 52761
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The Friends of the Pine Creek Grist Mill

Pine Creek Grist Mill is located in Wildcat Den State Park in Muscatine County one mile north of highway 22 between Muscatine and Davenport, Iowa.

The mission of the Friends of the Pine Creek Grist Mill is to restore, operate and maintain the Mill and to share the historical significance of the site through educational programs, public tours and events.

The Friends of the Pine Creek Grist Mill Membership

2015 Membership

Membership is only \$20.00 per year. Your membership includes
One year membership in the Friends
Newsletter three times a year
An opportunity to learn about and participate in a local historic treasure

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone number (_____) _____

E-Mail address _____

Send this application and your check to: FOM C/O Mrs. Gladys Mittman
2906 Provence Lane
Muscatine, Iowa 52761